Al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf

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Al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf

(An examination of his works and personality)

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IN LOVING MEMORY

OF

Late Maulana 'Abdur Razzāq Malīḥabādī

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PREFACE

Religion has never entered as a unifying factor among the Arabs. The nations in the Middle East have always felt themselves to be different from one another and attempts to give them some coherence on racial or religious basis has been accidental. Here and there, there have been attempts to implant such a unity but the dream of 'Arab unification as in the case of Europe has been a matter of political expediency and strategy. The religious unity established in the wake of Orthodox Caliphate ended first with the murder of Caliph 'Uthmān and later with the assassination of caliph 'Alī. The ascendancy of the Umayyads was more of political than a religious feat and the chief opposition to the Umayyads came from those who identified themselves either with the cause of Islām or considered the usurpers for short of the theocratic standards set by the Orthodox Caliphs. Their effort to establish 'Arab supremacy over Islamic theocracy turned into an open rebellion and nothing short of internecine war. It was left to Al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf to lend his services to the Umayyads and on him devolved the duty of establishing political unity and extending the frontiers of the Empire.

An unrelenting soldier Al-Ḥajjāj gave to the Umayyads an unshaken loyalty. Apart from the power he came to exert, he gave a stable government to the country and extended befitting honours on the deserving, while struck the recalcitrant with an unrelenting hand. The terror which spread in the wake of his reprisals on the wrong doer, drove men to their duties and work.

Eager and confident of his ability and strength, Al-Ḥajjāj had had a very positive ideal from the beginning—faith and pride in the Umayyads and with an uncompromising attitude towards his enemies, with extreme cautions and circumspection he led his master to success and victory by pursuing a scrupluous but daring and aggressive policy of expansion and conquest. Rebellion which was rampant before his arrival, was subdued and for twenty years his despotic rule gave peace and security to the people.

Once the civil strife which had absorbed his energies was subdued, Al-Ḥajjāj turned his operations on the one hand to the cultivation of arts and literature at home and the expansion of frontiers abroad. Poets and orators found favour at his court and thronged for political gains. Al-Ḥajjāj introduced many reforms. Some were political in character, while others had a direct bearing on the development of Arabic language and literature. Al-Ḥajjāj who began life as a school teacher introduced the use of diacritical marks placed above or below the consonants and as master of terse speech and eloquence, he assisted in the development of an elegant but forceful Arabic style. The peace and prosperity which now *prevailed within the Empire, enabled Al-Ḥajjāj to assist in the work* of expansion and conquest. In the East the armies invaded Transoxiana, captured Bokhārā and Samarkand, pushed towards the frontiers of India and penetrated as far as Multān.

With the death of Al-Ḥajjāj in 95 A.H., the Umayyads lost one of their undaunted and faithful defenders who had invested them with political power and sovereignty but made no conciliation with theocracy. Evidently the time was once again ripe for theological speculation and influence after his death.

AL-ḤAJJĀJ'S PARENTAGE AND EARLY YOUTH

Al-Ḥajjāj was born at At-Ṭā'if in 41 A.H. He belonged to the family of Thaqīf. His father Yūsuf ibn al-Ḥakam was a teacher at Aṭ-Ṭā'if and his mother Al-Fāri'a was formerly married to Al-Mughīrah ibn Shu'ba. Al-Ḥajjāj was a very weak child at birth. He became a teacher like his father at At-Ṭā'if. But he did not pursue this role for long.

His Birth and Youth

Abū Muhammed Al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf ath Thaqafī was born at Aṭ-Ṭā'if, in the year of 41 A.H. (661 A.D.), during the reign of the first Umayyad Caliph Mu'āwiyah. Arab historians assign different dates to the birth of Al-Ḥajjāj. Ṭabarī writes[1], "It is said that Al-Ḥajjāj was born in this year-42". while ibn 'Asākir[2] thinks that he was born in 39, 40 or 41 A.H. On the other hand, Adh Dhahabī[3] believes that he was born in the year 40 or 41 A.H. The other historians prefer to remain silent on his birth. They do not again concur on his age which according to their statements varies from 52 to 55 years. The most reliable sources like Ṭabarī and Mas'ūdī[4] state that Al-Ḥajjāj lived for 54 years. We can thus place the birth of Al-Ḥajjāj in 41 A.H. keeping in view the opinion of the historians who place his death in the second half of 95 A.H.

The genealogy of Al-Ḥajjāj is as follows :—

Al-Ḥajjāj son of Yūsuf, son of Al-Ḥakam, son of Abū, 'Aqīl, son of Al-Mas'ūdi, son of 'Āmir, son of Mu'attib, son of Mālik, son of Ka'b, son of 'Amr, son of Sa'd, son of 'Auf, son of Qasī also called Thaqīf. This accounts for the fact why Al-Ḥajjāj is often called, "Ath-Thaqafī", (The Thaqīfite).

1. 'Tārīkh-i-Ṭabarī', Vol II, Pp. 16.
2. 'Tārīkh al-Kabīr', Vol. IV, Pp. 169.
3. 'Tārīkh al Islām', Vol. I, Pp 652.
4. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1268.
   Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, Pp. 175.

Al-Ḥajjāj belonged to the tribe of Thaqīf. This powerful tribe was settled in the greater part of Aṭ-Ṭā'if in Ḥijāz long before the birth of the Prophet. The prosperity of Aṭ-Ṭā'if and, therefore, of the tribe depended on the rich orchards and the fertile valley around, which offered good agricultural prospects to the inhabitants. In the course of time Aṭ-Ṭā'if also rose to be a commercial centre of trade and a caravan route. The tribe of Thaqīf reputed to be very clever and strong embraced Islām after the battle of Ḥunain in the year 8 A.H. It supplied a galaxy of talented men to Islām in its political consolidation. Mughīrah ibn Shu'ba the clever politician, Ziyād ibn Abīhi the able and astute governor of Caliph Mu'āwiyah, Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf and Muḥammed ibn Al Qāsim all belonged to this tribe.

The tribe of Thaqīf had two branches: The Aḥlāf and the Banū Mālik. Al-Ḥajjāj's family ties were with the former, who were the descendants of 'Auf against their cousins Banū Mālik[2].

Al-Ḥajjāj's father Yūsuf ibn Al-Ḥakam was a teacher at Aṭ-Ṭā'if. His mother Al-Fāri'a was the daughter of Humām ibn 'Urwah ibn Mas'ūd. She too belonged to the tribe of Thaqīf[3]. Yūsuf was her second husband. Al-Fāri'a was formerly married to Al-Mughīrah ibn Shu'ba, who divorced her on a very flimsy pretext. The story goes that one morning when he entered her room at dawn, he found her brushing her teeth. Thereupon, he divorced her. On her asking whether he doubted her fidelity, he offered the excuse that since he had found her with the brush in her mouth so early in the morning, she had either advanced the time of her breakfast and was, therefore, a glutton or that she was equally dirty, for she had slept with particles of food in her mouth and had evidently gone to bed without cleaning her teeth. The simple wife explained that it was nothing of the sort. She was only taking out the pieces of brush that had stuck in her teeth. As this reason was not sufficient to satisfy him she burst out saying, "By God we were

1. Ibn Khallikān, 'Wafayāt al A'yān', Vol. I, Pp. 173.
   Ibn Qutaiba, 'Kitāb al Ma'ārif', Pp. 173.
   Al-Mubarrad, 'Al-Kāmil', Pp. 266.
   Ibn Khallikān, (Vol. I, Pp. 173) says that Qasī descended from Munabbih, son of Bakr, son of Hawāzin.
2. 'Aghānī', Vol. IV, Pp. 74.
   Ibn Qutaiba, 'Ma'ārif', Pp. 41.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Usud al-Ghāba', Vol. II, Pp. 37.
3. 'Aghānī', Vol. VI, Pp. 25.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Vol. III, Pp. 6.
   Ibn Khallikān, 'Wafayāt', Vol. I, Pp. 173

never happy when united and we are not sorry if separated"! Al-Mughīrah hurried out of the house and on meeting Yūsuf ibn Al-Hakam recommended him to marry his divorced wife. "She is a very noble lady", said he "and will be the mother of distinguished children". Yūsuf, thereafter, married Al-Fāri'a[1]. It was from her second marriage with Yūsuf that Al-Ḥajjāj was born. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi[2], Mas'ūdi[3] and ibn Khallikān[4] give Al-Ḥārith ibn Kaldah as the name of the first husband of Al-Fāri'a. But Ḥārith, who was a famous physician, died during the reign of Caliph 'Umar, twenty years before the birth of Al-Ḥajjāj. Aghānī[5] states that Al-Fāri'a daughter of Humām had from her first husband Al-Mughīrah ibn Shu'ba, a daughter who died in her infancy. This is a more authoritative version and generally accepted. Al-Mughīrah ibn Shu'ba was, therefore, the first husband of Al-Fāri'a.

Al-Ḥajjāj's ancestors were poor and low born[6]. They exercised a profession which was almost exclusively the lot of the slaves. Their chief source of existence was the little income they earned from the lifting of stones on their backs and the sinking of wells in the valley of Aṭ-Ṭā'if[7].

Very strange stories have been connected with the birth of Al-Ḥajjāj and ascribed by Arab historians to the evil genius of Iblis, under whose influence it is generally believed he was born. Mas'ūdi narrates that when the infant child refused to take the milk of his mother or of the nurse, Satan presented himself to the parents of the child in the guise of the physician Al-Ḥārith ibn Kaldah. Al-Ḥārith gave them the following prescription. "Slaughter a black male kid on the first day and make the infant drink its blood; repeat the process the second day and on the third day kill a he-goat and make the child taste its blood. Then slaughter a black snake for him and make him take its blood. Also rub it on his face. On the fourth day the child will take the mother's

1. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd', Vol. III, Pp. 6.
2. 'Iqd', Ibid.
3. 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, Pp. 132.
4. Ibn Khallikān, 'Wafayāt', Vol. I, Pp. 173.
5. 'Aghānī', Vol. VI, Pp. 25.
6. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Pp. 291.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Usud', Pp. 313.
7. Ibn 'Abd Rabbibi, 'Iqd', Vol. III, Pp. 17.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, Pp. 313.
   Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Pp. 291.

milk"[1]. Mas'ūdi tells us that the parents who were worried, followed the prescriptions of the physician. This treatment produced the desired effect but left in the child, says the chronicle, an irresistible desire to shed human blood[2]. Such stories are hardly believable today.

Al-Ḥajjāj was not born a healthy child. He came into the world a puny weakling, ugly of features and infirm in body and according to Mas'ūdi[3] "closed in the hinderpart". The parents were obliged to use surgical instruments to cure him of this natal defect. The nickname of 'Kulaib'[4], by which Al-Ḥajjāj was usually known may be ascribed to this physical deformity from which he suffered at birth. Later on in life many poets satirised him with the littleness associated with this word (Kulaib).

As Teacher at Aṭ-Ṭāi'f

Al-Ḥajjāj like his father became a teacher at Aṭ-Ṭā'if in his early youth[5]. The teachers at the time taught the children in mosques. They were provided with food by the parents of the children. There was no cash payment for the teachers and many of them preferred to offer honorary services to the schools (Maktab) where they worked. There were teachers like 'Abdullāh ibn Ḥāri<u>th</u> Qais ibn Sa'd and 'Alqama ibn Abi 'Alqama who taught Arabic language, grammar and prosody. There were among the teachers persons who related traditions, wrote and read the holy Qur'ān and called the Muslims to prayer مؤذن [6]. Al-Ḥajjāj taught the children how to recite and copy the holy Qur'ān[7].

Al-Ḥajjāj had an elder brother Muḥammed who was also a teacher. In the course of time Muḥammed rose to enjoy the confidence of the Umayyads like Ḥajjāj and became the Governor of Yemen. Mubarrad[8] writes أخوه but ibn Qutaiba[9], ibn 'Abd

1. Mas'ūdi, 'Murūj adh <u>Dh</u>ahab', Vol. III, Pp. 132.
2. Mas'ūdi, 'Murūj a<u>dh</u> <u>Dh</u>ahab', Ibid.
3. Mas'ūdi, 'Murūj a<u>dh</u> <u>Dh</u>ahab', Ibid.
4. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Pp. 290.
   'Ma'ārif', Pp. 271.
   ' 'Iqd', Vol. III, Pp. 6. we read that Kulaib was his name.
5. Mubarrad, Ibid.
6. Ibn Qutaiba, 'Ma'ārif', Pp. 238-239.
7. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Ibid.
8. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Pp. 290.
9. Ibn Qutaiba, 'Ma'ārif', Pp. 238.

Rabbihi[1] and ibn Khallikān[2] write أبو - . The resemblance of these two words and the absence of diacritical marks on them account, perhaps, for this confusion. We prefer the latter version according to which Al-Ḥajjāj and his father Yūsuf were teachers and it seems to be correct. The younger sister of Al-Ḥajjāj was called Zainab. She was renowned for her beauty which has been mentioned by many poets. But the latter never forgot to recall to Al-Ḥajjāj when at the height of his glory, the modest beginnings of his youth. One of them, Mālik ibn ar-Raib Al-Māzinī pursued by him, recited in his flight :

فماذا ترى الحجاج يبلغ جهده - اذا نحن جاوزنا حفير زياد
فلولا بنو مروان كان ابن يوسف - كما كان عبدا من عبيد اياد
زمان هو عبد المقر بذلة - يراوح صبيان القرى ويغادى

"What fruits in your opinion will the efforts of Al-Ḥajjāj bear after we have passed Ḥafīr Ziyād[3] ?
Without Banū Marwān ('Abdul-Malik and his brothers) the son of Yūsuf would be still one of the slaves of Iyād[4].
As at the period when a slave acknowledging his baseness, he frequented morning and evening the children of the villages"[5].

According to Mubarrad[6] another poet said at the time when Al-Ḥajjāj was at the height of his fortune :

اينسى كليب زمان الهزال - وتعليمه سورة الكوثر
رغيف له فلكة ما ترى - وآخر كالقمر الازهر

"Has Kulaib forgotten the time of his lowliness when he taught the Sūrat of Kauthar[7] ?

1. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd' Vol. III, Pp. 6.
2. Ibn Khallikān, 'Wafayāt al A'yān', Vol. I, Pp. 173.
3. Ḥafīr Ziyād, a place at a distance of five days walk from Baṣra (Yāqūt, 'Mu'jam', Vol. II, Pp. 297).
4. According to a tradition Iyād, the ancestor of Banū Iyād was the brother of Thaqīf (Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Pp. 266).
5. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Ibid.
   Ibn Qutaiba, 'Ma'ārif', Pp. 238.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Vol. III, Pp. 7.
6. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Pp. 290.
7. It is the name of a river in Paradise and the title of Sūrat CVIII is the holy Qur'ān.

A loaf of bread which was offered to him (as a present by his pupils) appeared as small as the whirl of a spindle and another as big as the moon in its full glare"[1].

Mubarrad further quotes a poet of Aṭ-Ṭā'if who while reciting his verses before the inhabitants of 'Irāq said :

كليب تمكن فى ارضكم   وقد كان فينا صغير الخطر

"Kulaib is powerful in your country ; he was in a humble state in our midst"[2].

Al-Ḥajjāj did not for long exercise the duties of a teacher, which was at the time a vocation more specially reserved for the freed slaves called موالى who were mostly Christians and Jews[3]. The free Arabs were soldiers by profession and so like other Arabs. Yūsuf and Al-Ḥajjāj soon took up the sword in defence of the Umayyads. The son, it appears, was a hard task master and not very popular with his students whom he often taught more with his whip than by word. Nevertheless, the experience that Al-Ḥajjāj acquired during this period helped him in the course of the new career that he adopted.

1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Pp. 290.
   Ibn Qutaiba, 'Ma'ārif', Pp. 239.
2. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Pp. 291.
3. Ibn Qutaiba, 'Ma'ārif', Pp. 238-239

II

AL-ḤAJJĀJ AS SOLDIER

In this chapter we will study the career of Al-Ḥajjāj as a soldier against the historical background of the political instability of the Islamic State. Al-Ḥajjāj offered his services to the Umayyads and fought for them at the battles of Al-Ḥarrah in 63 A.H. and Ar-Rabadhah in 65 A.H. He was entrusted with the administration of Tabāla in Tihāma but he left it very soon. He then proceeded to Damascus and joined the 'Shurṭa' of Rauḥ ibn Zinbā', the Vizier of Caliph 'Abdul Malik.

Al Ḥajjāj takes up the Sword in Defence of Umayyads

The murder of Caliph 'Uthmān in 35 A.H. (656 A.D.) disrupted the political stability of Islām established by the orthodox Caliphate The accession of Caliph 'Alī was disputed by Mu'āwiyah son of Abū Sufyān, Governor of Syria, on the one hand, and Ṭalḥa and Zubair two prominent members of the Quraish and 'Ā'isha the wife of the Prophet, on the other. Ṭalḥa and Zubair were killed in the Battle of the Camel in 36 A.H. (656 A.D.) and 'Ā'isha was detained and sent back to Medīna with every mark of respect. Caliph 'Alī proceeded to meet his rebels at the battle of Ṣiffīn in 36-37 A.H. (656-657 A.D.). Here the subsequent reference to arbitration and its repudiation by some of Caliph 'Alī's followers gave rise to the dissident group of Khārijites. The clever ruse of 'Amr ibn Al-'Āṣ further strengthened Mu'āwiyah's position.

The assassination of Caliph 'Alī in 40 A.H. (661 A.D.) and the abdication by his eldest son Caliph Ḥasan, develoved the Caliphate on Mu'āwiyah for life. Prince Ḥasan retired to Medīna and Mu'āwiyah became the Caliph in 41 A.H. (661 A.D.).

The accession of the Umayyads to power involved a number of controversial issues, the solution of which was subsequently found in the sword. Caliph Mu'āwiyah broke his covenant with Prince Ḥasan and nominated his son Yazīd as his successor to the throne in 41 A.H. He succeeded in securing the oath of loyalty to his

son Yazīd from the people of Medīna and Mecca. There were four prominent persons among the Muslims; Prince Ḥusain son of Caliph 'Alī, 'Abdullāh son of Caliph 'Umar, 'Abdur Rahmān son of Caliph Abū Bakr and 'Abdullāh son of Zubair (who himself had an eye to the Caliphate) who refused to take the oath on any condition.

Caliph Mu'āwiyah died in 60 A.H. (680 A.D.) and on his death Yazīd ascended the throne. according to his father's testament. The accession of Yazīd ended the established practice of choosing the Caliph and replaced it by the principle of hereditary monarchy. The temporal and spiritual headship of Islām depended henceforth on the nomination of a successor by the sovereign.

The battle of Karbalā quietened the claims of the Prophet's family to the pontifical headship of Islām. The Martyrdom of Prince Ḥusain and his family caused a wave of horror throughout Islām and gave birth to a movement which afterwards ousted the Umayyads from power. Thus the field was left to be contested by a number of parties and their supporters.

The main parties that divided Muslims at the time were the following :—

1. The Orthodox party, the principal party whose centre of operation was Damascus in Syria supported the rise of the Umayyads to power.
2. The Medinites and the supporters of 'Ā'isha, wife of the Prophet sided 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair, who considered the Umayyads as usurpers and opposed them tooth and nail.
3. The Shi'ites or the legitimists, supporters of the House of Caliph 'Alī and his family.
4. The Khārijites or the Republicans who wanted the Caliphate to pass on to the most deserving candidate. They went to the extent of claiming the right to depose the Caliph, if he failed to carry out his duties satisfactorily.

These parties had their original dispute turned solely on the question of Caliphate. It is against this historical background that we will study Al-Ḥajjāj.

In view of the opportunity offered by the rise of the Umayyads to power and the close affiliations of the tribe of Thaqīf with the ruling house, Al-Ḥajjāj and his father Yūsuf thought it

opportune to join their camp. They, therefore, relinquished their humble duties as teachers at Aṭ-Ṭā'if and offered their services to Yazīd I, who finding it difficult to maintain his position accepted assistance from all quarters. In Medīna the feeling against Yazīd I after the death of Prince Ḥusain was intense. The Medinites abandoned their loyalty to him and drove away his Governor from the city. On hearing this, Yazīd sent a huge Syrian army of 10,000 strong under the command of Muslim ibn 'Uqbah. Al-Ḥajjāj and his father joined this army as soldiers and fought in the battle of Al-Ḥarrah in 63 A.H. against the Medinites.

Al-Ḥajjāj at the Battle of Ḥarrah

Al-Ḥajjāj, it is reported, took to flight, leaving behind his father Yūsuf to face the danger. Later Al-Ḥajjāj regretted this act of cowardice and said :

انا الذى فررت يوم الحرة - ثم ثنيت كرة بفرة
والشيخ لا يفر الا مرة

"Yes. I took to flight, on the day of Al-Ḥarrah, but later, I made good my fault by renewing the attack.
For a Shaikh takes to flight only once"[1].

The Syrians who were victorious in the battle of Al-Ḥarrah, next marched on to Mecca, under the command of Ḥuṣain ibn Numair, who had succeeded, as general, Muslim ibn 'Uqbah. The Syrian forces surrounded the holy city and badly damaged the super-structures of the Ka'ba. But in the meantime news came that Yazīd I was dead. The Syrians raised the siege and returned to Damascus. Mecca and the Ka'ba were saved from complete ruin.

Immediately on the death of Yazīd I, (64 A.H.) the Medinites acknowledged 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair as the Caliph of Ḥijāz. Born at Medīna twenty months after the Hijra (he was the first child born to the family of a Muhājir) 'Abdullāh was presented by his mother Asmā' to the Prophet, who took him on his knees and gave him the name of 'Abdullāh 'Servant of God'. The family of this child had blood relations with the Prophet. Ṣafīyah, the maternal grandmother of 'Abdullāh was the aunt of the Prophet. Asmā' was the daughter of Caliph Abū Bakr and sister of 'Ā'isha.

1. 'Aghānī', Vol. XVI, Pp. 42.

The latter had brought up the child, her nephew, and proclaimed him as her heir[1]. Before the Battle of the Camel (where Talḥa and Az-Zubair, his father were killed) 'Abdullāh had fought in Egypt under the command of 'Amr. Mu'āwiyah I, who knew him and recognised in him a dangerous rival, used to say to his children particularly to Yazīd, who was to succeed him, "He who lurks about you like a lion, who uses strategems like a fox to deceive you and takes advantage of a favourable chance to come out of his den—it is Ibn az-Zubair. Consequently, if you are victorious over him when he rushes on you, do not spare him but cut him to pieces. As far as possible, avoid shedding the blood of your family[2].

'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair had outwardly posed himself as a defender of the rights of the family of 'Alī but all along projected his plans for their extermination at the hands of the Umayyads. He had concealed his hatred for them, partially by remaining inactive and at other times fighting the enemies of Islām in Africa or playing ruses on Al-Ḥusain. After the massacre of Karbalā, he no longer concealed his pretentions. He proclaimed himself the only legitimate Caliph and thus exercised his power from the time of raising of the siege of Mecca at the beginning of 64 A.H. (end of 683 A.D.) till his death in 73 A.H. (692 A.D.)[3]. During the period of nine years he disputed the Umayyad Caliphs who in turn resorted to strategic measures to vanquish this powerful enemy. It was Al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf who accomplished this political feat.

Al-Ḥajjāj at the Battle of Rabadhah

The military career of Al-Ḥajjāj did not open under happy auspices. He had joined the Syrian troops sent by Yazīd I against the Medinites but taken to flight at the battle of Al-Ḥarrah. Two years later he and his father again fought at the battle of Rabadhah in 65 A.H. (684 A.D.)[4] during the Caliphate of Marwān ibn al Ḥakam. The Syrian commander Ḥubaish ibn Daljah was killed

1. 'Ā'isha was also addressed as "Umm 'Abdullāh".
2. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd', Vol. III, Pp. 136.
   Ibn aṭ Ṭiqṭaqā, 'Al-Fākhrī fi' l-ādāb as-sulṭāniyya wa 'd-duwal al-islāmīyya, Pp. 168.
3. Ibn Qutaiba, 'Ma'ārif', Pp. 181.
   Mas'ūdi, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. II, Pp. 122.
4. Ar-Rabadhah, a town to the east of Medīna, Yāqūt, 'Mu'jam al Buldān', Vol. II, Pp. 157.

by 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair and in the general rout that followed the defeat, Al-Ḥajjāj and his father took to flight, mounted on the same camel. Yūsuf who was the standard-bearer abandoned his flag to the enemy. A poet remarked :

نجى يوسف الثقفي ركض ... دراك بعد ما سقط اللواء

ولو ادركنه لقضين نحبا ... به ولكل مخطاة وقاء

"A rapid and fortunate race saved Yūsuf, the Thaqīfite, after he had let his flag fall. If they (pursuing horses), had caught him, they would have ended his days ; but against every false step there is a safeguard"[1].

'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair took revenge on the Syrians at Ar-Rabadhah. It is most likely that if Ibn az-Zubair with all the power that he possessed then in the Muslim world had consented to make common cause with the Khārijites under Nāfi' ibn al-Azraq[2], he would have supplanted the Caliph of Damascus. But, he allowed the chance to be lost and never followed up his victory.

The early beginnings of Al-Ḥajjāj in the service of Umayyads, as seen, were hardly significant. This insignificance cannot, however, be accounted to the fact that he did not possess military prowess or strength. On the other hand, we believe that Al-Ḥajjāj looked about for an opportunity for the realization of his ambitious projects. And he had not met with such a chance so far.

Al-Ḥajjāj at Tabāla, Damascus and Palestine

According to Ibn Qutaiba[3], Al-Ḥajjāj was given the charge of the administration of the town of Tabāla in Tihāma, while his father eventually got a place of reliance in the Government of 'Abdul Mālik. But Al-Ḥajjāj, ambitious as he was, did not consider the post equal to his merit. He, therefore, left Tabāla to its

1. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 578
   Ibn Qutaiba, 'Ma'ārif', Pp. 175.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, Pp. 157.
2. Nāfi' ibn al-Azraq believed that all followers other than the Khārijites were infidels and doomed to death with their wives and children. He became the leader of the famous sect of Azraqites. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ al Buldān', Pp. 55-56.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Vol. I, Pp. 261.
3. Ibn Qutaiba, 'Ma'ārif', Pp. 173.

miserable plight[1], and returned to Aṭ-Ṭā'if[2]. Al-Ḥajjāj did not, however, stay at home for long. He soon left Aṭ-Ṭā'if for Damascus[3]. Here he joined the 'Shurṭa' (the police) of the famous Abū-Zar'a Rauḥ ibn Zinbā' al Judhāmī, who was the vizier of Caliph 'Abdul Malik and commander of the police[4]. According to ibn Qutaiba, Al-Ḥajjāj was appointed captain of the 'Shurṭa' of Abân ibn Marwān, brother of the Caliph and Governor of Palestine[5].

1. Yāqūt, 'Mu'jam', Vol. I, Pp. 816.
   Ibn Qutaiba, 'Ma'ārif', Pp. 173.
   Yāqūt, Ibid., States that Tabāla of Al-Ḥajjāj was a famous town in Tihāma, on the road from Yemen.
   Ibn Khallikān, 'Wafayāt al-A'yān', Vol. II, Pp. 429.
2. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd' Vol. III, Pp. 7.
3. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Ibid.
4. Ibn Khallikān, 'Wafayāt al A'yān', Vol. I, Pp. 173.
   Rauḥ ibn Zinbā' was the second husband of Ḥamīda, daughter of An-Nu'mān ibn Bashīr, who later married Al-Ḥajjāj (Aghānī, Vol. VIII, Pp. 138 and 140). Rauḥ died in 73 A.H. (692 & 693 A.D.).
5. Ibn Qutaiba, 'Ma'ārif', Pp. 166 and 173.

III

AL-HAJJĀJ AS COMMANDER

In this chapter we will study how Al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf was introduced to Caliph 'Abdul Malik by Rauḥ ibn Zinbā'. The Caliph who was prepared to leave for 'Irāq against Muṣ'ab ibn Zubair, the brother of 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair, appointed Al-Ḥajjāj commander of the rear guard. Muṣ'ab was defeated and killed. The Caliph then sent Al-Ḥajjāj against 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair. Al-Ḥajjāj left Kūfa for Mecca. He stayed at Aṭ-Ṭā'if for three months. He then started with his army and encamped on mount Abū Qubais. Mecca remained besieged for six months whereafter 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair was killed. Al-Ḥajjāj's success over the sons of Az-Zubair was complete.

Defeat and Death of Muṣ'ab ibn az-Zubair

Al-Ḥajjāj who was in the Shurṭa of Rauḥ ibn Zinbā' impressed his master with his prowess and military strategy. Rauḥ soon found an opportunity to introduce Al-Ḥajjāj to the Caliph 'Abdul Malik at Damascus.

'Abdul Malik was becoming uneasy at the growing influence of 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair who had proclaimed himself Caliph of Mecca. The latter's brother Muṣ'ab had become the undisputed master of 'Irāq after defeating and putting to death Mukhtār ibn Abi-'Ubaid, the Thaqifite. 'Abdul Malik's task was getting difficult. He did not want the two brothers to join forces against him and oust him from the throne of Syria. He, therefore, made preparations to meet this challenge separately. His first move was in the East, against Muṣ'ab, the brother of 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair, the Governor of 'Irāq. His second move was in the West against the Caliph of Mecca. His subsequent victory in this feat was due to Al-Ḥajjāj.

'Abdul Malik left Damascus in 70 A.H. to attack Muṣ'ab ibn az-Zubair. He proceeded against Muṣ'ab at the head of a large army but found himself in a great difficulty. There was wide spread indiscipline among the soldiers. When away from their homes, they either deserted or refused to march or halt at his

orders. 'Abdul Malik. therefore, became apprehensive of the consequences of this expedition against Muṣ'ab. He bespoke of his fears of such a disorderly campaign to his vizier Rauḥ ibn Zinbā', who was also his chief adviser. Rauḥ recommended Al-Ḥajjāj to his master. "If the Prince of Believers", said Rauḥ, "wished to give the command of the troops to a man called Al-Ḥajjāj, who constituted a part of his 'Shurṭa', this man would know well how to control them and make them march when the Prince of Believers marched, and to encamp when he encamped". "Well", said the Caliph, "I give him the command of the army"[1].

Al-Ḥajjāj was entrusted with the task of re-establishing discipline in the army. He immediately set to work, and wherever he found the soldiers hesitant, he burnt their tents and put them on the march. To their surprise, the troops of Rauḥ ibn Zinbā' had the Amīr in their midst one day, when they were taking their meals, while the rest of the army was on the move. "What is it that has prevented you to march with the Prince of the Believers"? asked Al-Ḥajjāj of them. "Stop", they shouted at him. "O son of Lakhnā (filthy woman) come and eat with us"[2]! Al-Ḥajjāj immediately ordered the soldiers to be beaten with whips and the tents of Rauḥ ibn Zinbā' were set ablaze. Nothing could prevent him from doing his duty. Not even the obligations of the man who had introduced him to the Caliph.

The vizier bursting into fury at the audacity of Al-Ḥajjāj reported to the Caliph, "O Prince of the Believers, this Al-Ḥajjāj, who was in my 'Shurṭa' has beaten my servants and burnt my tents". "Let him be brought before me", shouted the Caliph. When Al-Ḥajjāj appeared before 'Abdul Malik, the latter said in anger, "Who asked you to do what you have done"? "Thyself", replied Al-Ḥajjāj, firm in voice. "My hand is thy hand, and my whip thy own". Continuing he suggested, "And what prevents the Prince of the Believers from offering Rauḥ ibn Zinbā' two tents instead of one, two servants for one; rather than obstruct me from discharging my duty, which he has entrusted to me"? The Prince of the Believers was convinced of the firmness of purpose

1. Ibn Khallikān, 'Wafayāt al A'yān', Vol. I, Pp. 173-174.
Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Vol, III, Pp. 6-7.
2. 'Wafayāt al A'yān', Vol. I, Pp. 173-174.
Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Vol. III, Pp. 6-7.
3. Ibn Khallikān, 'Wafayāt al A'yān', Vol. I, Pp. 173-174.
Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Ibid.

of his servant; he, therefore, retained him in his service and compensated the vizier. "It was the first proof", adds Ibn Khallikān "of the general's military talent"[1]. In the presence of such a firm resolution, the soldiers were obliged to march and halt at the orders of the Caliph. 'Abdul Malik now assured of the discipline in his army advanced to meet Muṣ'ab ibn az-Zubair in the valley of the Tigris and the Euphrates.

Before the army came in sight of the enemy, 'Abdul Malik appointed Al-Ḥajjāj as commander of the rear guard of his forces. Muḥammed ibn Marwān, the brother of the Caliph was at the vanguard, 'Abdullāh ibn Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiyah was in charge of the right wing and his brother Khālid ibn Yazīd commanded the left wing[2]. Ma'sūdī[3] says that Al-Ḥajjāj was in the vanguard. But he contradicts his own statement by saying a little later that Al-Ḥajjāj was in the rear guard. Ibn Qutaiba[4], Ṭabarī[5] and Balādhurī[6], on the other hand, state that the vanguard was commanded by Muhammed ibn Marwān. This shows that whereas Mas'ūdī is confused, it is certain that Al-Ḥajjāj was commander of the rear forces. He directed the military operations in the rear-guard of the army. In addition to this duty he prevented indiscipline and desertion. This manoeuvre of Al-Ḥajjāj and the success with which he maintained discipline in the forces of 'Abdul Malik account for the subsequent victory of the Caliph over Mus'ab ibn az-Zubair.

The forces of 'Abdul Malik and Mus'ab met in the plain of Maskin, on the border of Dujail, near the convent of the Catholics[7]. The bloody battle raged savagely, until at the decisive moment, Muṣ'ab deserted by his army, found himself fighting a heroic battle with a handful of seven men. The forces of Al-Kūfa had betrayed him as they had abandoned Caliph 'Alī, Al-Ḥusain and Al-Mukhtār in earlier battles. The forces of 'Abdul Malik, on the other hand, were kept united by Al-Ḥajjāj who did not allow the deserters to escape or permit his soldiers to become slack in their operations

1. 'Wafayat al A'yān', Ibid.
2. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 804.
3. 'Murūj', Vol. III, Pp. 112-113.
4. 'Ma'ārif', Pp. 99.
5 'Tārīkh-i Ṭabarī', Ibid.
6. ''Ansab al-Ashrāf', Pp. 2
7. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj', Vol. III, Pp. 112-115.
   Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 805.

against the enemy. Muṣ'ab refused the offer of safety given by 'Abdul Malik and fell fighting with his young son 'Īsā. He died on the 13th of Jumādā 72 A.H. (13 October 691 A.D.). He was 36 years old[1]. 'Abdul Malik had carried the day. The contribution of Al-Ḥajjāj to his victory was notable. It was Al-Ḥajjāj's first success on the battle field. Whereas as a soldier he had found safety in flights, he made his name now as a commander of soldiers.

Defeat and Death of 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair

After the death of Muṣ'ab ibn az-Zubair, 'Abdul Malik prepared to return to Damascus. Before leaving for his capital, he appointed his brother Bishr ibn Marwān as Governor of Kūfa and placed Khālid ibn 'Abdullāh in charge of Baṣra. Al-Ḥajjāj appeared before 'Abdul Malik one day and offered his services to the Caliph against 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair. "I have seen in my dream", said he to 'Abdul Malik, "that I caught the person of Ibn az-Zubair and that I stripped him of his skin. Send me against him and give me the command of the expedition"[2]. 'Abdul Malik who had known the hardihood of the Thaqīf granted his request and entrusted him with the sole command of fighting his most formidable foe, residing in the heart of the holy city of Mecca.

Al-Ḥajjāj left Kūfa for Mecca in the month of Jumādā in the year 72 October, 691 A.D. He was thirty-one years old and in command of a Syrian force of 2,000 men[3]. He did not march upon Mecca directly, but passing through Ar-Rabadhah and avoiding the route leading through Medīna, he reached Aṭ-Ṭā'if in the month of Sha'bān without meeting any resistance[4]. Al-Ḥajjāj who was tactful and skilled in conducting military operations was driven to this strategic manoeuvre by a number of motives.

1. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 807.
   Mas'ūdī, Vol. III, Pp. 116.
   ' 'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 2 and 17.
   Muṣ'ab according to Mas'ūdī, Ibid., was a beautiful youth glorified by many a poet; the poet ibn Qais ar-Ruqayyāt says of him; Muṣ'ab is a flame lighted by God. The brightness of his countenance dissipates the darkness.
2. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 829.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Vol. II, Pp 326.
3. ' 'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 38.
   Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 830.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, Pp. 284.
4. ' 'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 38.
   Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 830.

At-Ṭā'if renowned for its agricultural and commercial prosperity was also the wealthy possession of many inhabitants of Mecca, who owned there rich tracts of land and drew their subsistence from it. It was also the summer resort of many rich Quraish families, who had their houses in Mecca and who returned here to relax from the sultry heat of the holy city situated in a rocky valley without shade. The physical suitability of the place cannot, however, be a sufficient explanation for Al-Ḥajjāj's move. The best explanation that can be offered in support of Al-Ḥajjāj's strategy seems to be the military importance of the place.

At-Ṭā'if built on Mount Ghazwān and situated at a distance of a day's walk from Mecca occupied a very strong position. As commander of a small army against superior forces of the enemy, Al-Ḥajjāj preferred to operate his forces from a position of height in the vicinity of low lying land. He could in this way perceive his enemy in the interior. Moreover, such an advantageous position inspired confidence in the soldiers against the enemy.

Al-Ḥajjāj, who had passed the best part of his childhood and also his early youth at At-Ṭā'if, knew the country around better from its southern route. He was also sure to receive the support of his tribesmen, the Thaqīfites who were settled there. He did not ignore the fact that direct operations by him against the holy city would also unite the military operations of Medīna against his small contingent of troops. This would mean a stab in his back. From At-Ṭā'if, he held the enemy in the front and could easily escape in the rear, if compelled by the overwhelming strength of the enemy.

The Chronicles do not mention any battle which Al-Ḥajjāj had to fight for the occupation of At-Ṭā'if[1]. The latter was, therefore, occupied peacefully. Al-Ḥajjāj's stay at At-Ṭā'if had been a little more than three months[2]. He next proceeded towards the mount of 'Arafat with detachments of cavalry. These detachments had frequent skirmishes with the soldiers of Ibn az-Zubair, sent from time to time to meet Al-Ḥajjāj. But every time the troops of Al-Ḥajjāj alone were victorious[3].

1. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', Pp. 56
   Yāqūt, 'Mu'jam', Vol. III, Pp. 495.
2. 'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 39.
   Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 830 and 831.
3. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 830.
   'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 38.

All these initial successes won by Al-Ḥajjāj did not in any way cowdown the courage of Ibn az-Zubair, who assured of his safety in the holy city, remained sufficiently strong; more so because Al-Ḥajjāj acted with religious restraint in respect of the holy city as advised by the Caliph. The latter had ordered him to face the army of Ibn az-Zubair and announce that in case he consented to acknowledge the Umayyad Caliphate, he was to be granted full amnesty[1]; if he refused, the town was to be besieged till the people were reduced to starvation level but in no case was the sanctity of the holy edifice of Ka·ba to be desecrated[2]. Al-Ḥajjāj's servile obedience to his master's orders and the tentative success won by him could not bring the rebel to submission. He knew that a heavy onslaught and a major offensive could alone be helpful. He, therefore, wrote to the Caliph asking permission for two things; first, to attack the holy city of Mecca and second to send him reinforcement of men and arms. In this way Al-Ḥajjāj pledged to bring 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair to submission[3].

The Caliph who eight years earlier had denounced the sacrilege committed by his cousin Yazīd I, when the latter set fire to the Ka'ba, granted Al-Ḥajjāj the permission to attack Mecca and the holy precincts. He also ordered Ṭāriq ibn 'Amr to go at the head of 5,000 men to join Al-Ḥajjāj. Thus assured that his request was favourably received, Al-Ḥajjāj said to his men, "Make your preparations for the Ḥajj"[4].

Al-Ḥajjāj established his new camp on the mountain of Abū-Qubais, situated to the south-east of Mecca. The siege of the holy town began on the first day of Dhu'l-qa'da of the year 72 A.H. (25th March 692 A.D.) one month before the holy pilgrimage. The catapults were placed on Mount Abū-Qubais and operations against the enemy started in right earnest.

Luck favoured the Syrians. In the month of Dhu'l-qa'da of the same year 72 A.H. Ṭāriq occupied Medīna and expelled the Governor of Ibn az-Zubair. Leaving as his emissary a certain Tha'laba, a vindictive and cruel man, Ṭarīq proceeded towards

1. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 831.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, Pp. 284.
2. ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 38.
3. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 830.
4. ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 39, 42 and 57.
   Ṭabarī, Ibid.

Mecca. On the 1st of Dhu'l hijja, 72 A.H. (692 A.D.) Tarīq joined Al-Ḥajjāj with his reinforcements before the gates of Mecca[1].

In spite of the fact that it was the time for Ḥajj, Al-Ḥajjāj and his men remained armed. He drove his army to Minā and 'Arafat. "I saw him on the hills of 'Arafat", reports an eye witness in Ṭabarī. "He was mounted on his horse, wearing the helmet as well as the armour"[2]. Al-Ḥajjāj thereafter wanted to perform the 'Ṭawāf' around the Ka'ba and also the course between Aṣ-Ṣafā and Al-Marwah. He was, however, not permitted to accomplish these ceremonies by Ibn az-Zubair who had not been allowed to go to 'Araft for a similar ceremony. Al-Ḥajjāj, thereupon, hurled big stones at the sacred edifice and the holy pilgrims below[3].

'Abdullāh son of Caliph 'Umar, who was then in Mecca adjured the chief of the besiegers to stop throwing stones on the crowds of pilgrims, who desired to perform Ḥajj and particularly complete the 'Ṭawāf' round the holy house. Al-Ḥajjāj, it appears heeded the remonstrances of a Prince who was respected and held in esteem. He suspended the use of the catapult. Taking advantage of this armistice Ibn az-Zubair made the turns prescribed around Ka'ba 'Ṭawāf' and slaughtered some animals of sacrifice at Al-Marwah on the day of immolation (10th Dhu'l ḥijja). Thereupon when the religious ceremonies were thus accomplished in halves on both sides, the herald of Al-Ḥajjāj came out of the camp and advancing towards the pilgrims asked them to return to their countries as the catapults were ready, "to throw stones on the heretic Ibn az-Zubair"[4]. Ibn az-Zubair had failed to abide by the terms of the armistice.

The siege entered the first month of the year 73 A.H. Al-Ḥajjāj waited for a final assault until the provisions of his enemy

1. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 830-831.
   Ibn 'Abd Rābbihi', ''Iqd', Vol. II, Pp. 324.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, Pp. 285.
   ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 42-43.
2. Ṭabarī, Ibid.
   Ibn al-Athīr, Ibid.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, Ibid.
   ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 42-43.
3. ''Ansāb', Ibid.
   Ṭabarī, Ibid.
   Ibn al-Athīr, Ibid.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, Ibid.
4. ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 43-44.
   Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 830-831.

were exhausted but his opponent distributed them with such reasonable parsimony that he saw that his men neither starved nor had a stomach-full. He hoped that his companions would keep up courage so long as the store of food lasted. But whereas Ibn az-Zubair's store-houses were full of cheese, barley, maize and dates, his men soon began to experience the stark horrors of a besieged town. In view of the scarcity of meat and the prices of meat going up, (a chicken was sold for 10 dirhems) the besieged began to kill their horses. Al-Ḥajjāj and his men who saw this miserable sight threw one day a dog from a catapult whereupon the besieged feasted on it. Famine and starvation followed in the wake of indiscriminate slaughter of animals. Al-Ḥajjāj who was waiting for such a moment intensified his bombardment from his catapults. To the horrors of famine and starvation the besieged experienced the severe fury of the machines of war. An eye witness in Balādhurī[1] recounts that the stones thrown by the Catapults, "were as big as the tunics of women". The holy Ka'ba and the town were threatened with total destruction[2].

On the other hand, the Syrian troops in possession of the hills were secure in their arms and positions. They were supplied with rich foodstuffs like biscuits and flour brought by the caravans coming from Damascus[3].

Al-Ḥajjāj was almost sure of his victory when a natural phenomenon seemed to discourage his men. A terrible storm closed in around them and its frightful roars silenced the noise of the stones dropped on the city by the catapults. The Syrians deterred by their superstitions, condemned their sacrilegious action. They feared they were struck by the terror of God and soon suspended action. Al-Ḥajjāj who did not want his soldiers to break under the duress of superstition went close to the machine, wrapped his clothes in his belt, picked up a big stone and placed it on the catapult. "Throw it", said he and he helped them to throw it. This example raised the failing courage of his men who resumed their work. But the next day, reports Ṭabarī[4] the storm blew

1. 'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 46-47.
2. 'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 46-47.
3. 'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 43.
   Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 831.
4. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 844-845.
   'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 47.

again and its two successive thunder bolts killed twelve men of Al-Ḥajjāj's army. This time the Syrians were completely discouraged and disheartened by what they believed to be an evident sign of divine vengeance. "Do not interpret it unfavourably", cried the general "I am a native of Tihāma and I know that such storms are frequent here. This proclaims that the capture of the town is imminent. Rejoice, the same accident will strike our enemies"[1]. In fact, the following day there was another burst of storm and the same impartial thunder bolt killed in Mecca several soldiers of Ibn az-Zubair. "You see then", said Al-Ḥajjāj to his soldiers, "that heaven does not spare your enemies any more than it spares you. The difference between you two is that you obey God, while they disobey Him"[2]. Al-Ḥajjāj, who cleverly drew a happy augury from this natural phenomenon reassured his men. They continued to throw missiles on the enemy.

Besieged for six long months, the inhabitants of Mecca were reduced to the last extremity. Driven by hunger and famine, they began to abandon Ibn az-Zubair and joined the camps of Al-Ḥajjāj who had promised safety to those who offered their submission. The Egyptians and the Abysinians, who had earlier offered their services to Ibn az-Zubair, had already deserted him, in view of his disregard of the word of honour at the time of the armistice. The Jews, who were disliked by him and not taken into confidence, were also disgusted[3]. The strength of the deserters soon mounted to 10,000 and among them, they counted Hamzah and Khubaib, two sons of the Caliph of Ḥijāz[4]. A third, called Az-Zubair, refused to desert his unfortunate father. He continued fighting till he found a glorious death[5] by the side of his father.

In view of these deflections, we see Ibn az-Zubair hesitating and it is not doubtful that he was then inclined to accept amnesty which was offered to him by Al-Ḥajjāj in the name of 'Abdul Malik[6]. He went to his mother Asmā' to make her share his anguish and

1 Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 844-845.
'Ansāb', Pp. 47.

2. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 844-845.
'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 47.

3. 'Ansāb', Pp. 44-45.

4. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 845.
Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, Pp. 286.

5. 'Ansāb', Pp. 73.

6. 'Ansāb', Pp. 71-73.
Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, Pp. 120-121.

if they were but a thousand"[1].

These battles took place around the Ka'ba but after each desperate charge, the son of Asmā' used to return to the holy Ka'ba and pray for a while in the interior of the building[2]. As his flag fell into the hands of the Syrians, he threw himself on them with such fury that he repulsed them outside the holy enclosure and up to the hill of Al-Ḥajūn. There he was still fighting with them, when a brick hit his head and stunned him. The blood covered his face and head when he said, "The blood from our wound does not trickle on our ankles; it is on our feet that it drops"[3]. Returning to Ka'ba, covered with wounds, he ordered his companions to throw away their sheaths, "No one should ask where 'Abdullāh is", he added, "whoever seeks me shall find me in the first line"[4].

Seeing the failing courage of his soldiers, who appeared scared, Al-Ḥajjāj encouraged them as before. He alighted from the horse and led them personally against the furious lion[5]. They then attacked in thousands from all sides the tiny band of followers of Ibn az-Zubair. Ibn az-Zubair wanted to attack them but hit on the head by the stones they threw on him, he fell. A slave woman who was posted by the order of Asmā' at the gate of the Ka'ba, had to announce to the daughter of Abū Bakr the outcome of fighting. When she saw Ibn az-Zubair succumb to his injury, this slave woman uttered a loud cry, "Alas! Prince of Believers", she said weeping. Thus fell fighting, 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair on the 14th of Jumādā 1st 73 A.H. 1st October, 692 A.D. He had lived for the first seventy two years of Islam years; and with him fell his faithfull companions. The siege of Mecca, since the arrival of Al-Ḥajjāj on Mount Abū-Qubais, had lasted six and a half months[6].

When the news of the death of Ibn az-Zubair spread, the

1. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 849.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd', Vol. II, Pp. 325.
2. 'Ansāb', Pp. 53-55.
   Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj', Vol. III, Pp. 121.
3. 'Ansāb', Pp. 52, 53 and 58.
   Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 850-851.
   Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj', Vol. III, Pp. 121.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, Pp. 285.
4. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 850.
   Mas'ūdī, Ibid. Ibn al-Athīr, Ibid.
5. 'Ansāb', Pp. 52.
6. 'Ansāb', Pp. 53-58.
   Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 851.
   Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj', Vol. III, Pp. 120-122
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbibi, 'Iqd', Vol. II, Pp. 325.

Syrians rejoiced raising cries of 'Allāh Akbar'. Al-Ḥajjāj joined them in their rejoicings and knelt to thank God[1]. It was his second great success—a political feat which subsequently re-established and consolidated Muslim power in Western Arabia. Whereas his countrymen in the last four decades had learnt to entrust their faith in religion alone, he led them to a political consciousness of which they had not been aware except for the time of the Prophet's life and Caliph 'Umar. The son of Yūsuf stitched in fact the political mantle which had been torn to pieces in the wake of internecine wars and jealous party feuds. In this hour of national triumph, Al-Ḥajjāj did not forget to pay his gratitude to God for crowning him with this remarkable achievement.

According to a tradition reported in 'Iqd al-Farīd[2], Ibn az-Zubair who was covered with wounds, could not rise from the ground and was beheaded by Al-Ḥajjāj himself in the interior of the Ka'ba, while in Balādhurī we read that it was an Arab of the tribe of Murād who beheaded him. As a more authentic source, we accept the version of Balādhurī.

Accompanied by Ṭāriq, the Commander-in-Chief entered the ruined Ka'ba. They saw the corpse of Ibn az-Zubair, which was lying on the earth, "soaked in blood". "Never", said Ṭāriq "did women give birth to a man more valiant than this (Ibn az-Zubair). "You are eulogising a man who was in revolt against the Prince of the Believers", retorted Al-Ḥajjāj, for whom his master's interests always outweighed any other consideration. "Yes and that will be our excuse", replied Ṭāriq, "for without that we would not be pardoned for having besieged for seven months this man, who had no ditch, no fortress, nor any means of defence and who was equal to us or even our better". This conversation was reported to the Caliph, says Balādhurī, who approved of the sentiments of Ṭāriq[4].

The mosque and the Ka'ba, which were stained with blood and covered with stones, "were cleaned and swept"[3] by the order of Al-Ḥajjāj and the Quraish of Mecca offered the oath of fealty

1 Ṭabarī, Ibid.
2 Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, Vol. II, Pp. 326.
3. ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 58.
4. ''Ansāb', Pp. 69.
Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 851.

to the Umayyads, at the hands of the vanquisher"[1].

The heads of Ibn az-Zubair and of his two companions, 'Abdullāh ibn Ṣafwān, and 'Umāra ibn 'Amr ibn Ḥazm, fallen by the side of their chief, were sent to Medina; they were exposed for sometime and then when they had served as toys to the Syrian garrison of the town, they were taken to 'Abdul Malik[2].

An anecdote attributed to Al-Ḥajjāj has been reported by Balādhurī.

One of the companions of Ibn az-Zubair, 'Abdullāh ibn Muṭī', succumbed to his injuries. Al-Ḥajjāj wanted to preside over his funeral and recite the prescribed prayer. "You pray for him, when it was you who killed him", shouted one of Al-Ḥajjāj's men, "Do you know what I have said"? replied the officiating priest. "I *have only said this*: "O *Allah, if this* man was the enemy of your friends and the friend of your enemies, roast him in the fire of Hell"[3].

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Not content with having sent the head of Ibn az-Zubair to 'Abdul Malik, Al-Ḥajjāj refused to give his body to Asmā' for burial. He crucified the corpse at the cemetery of Al-Ḥajūn in Mecca and appointed guards to prevent it from being removed. According to a tradition reported by Balādhurī, Ibn az-Zubair, foreseeing the putrefication of his body at the hands of his enemy, had swallowed myrrh and musk a few days before his death. Al-Ḥajjāj tied a hungry bitch or a she-cat to the gibbet with the corpse to destroy the perfume and aromatic. He then announced to the Caliph the posthumous desecrations inflicted on the enemy. But 'Abdul Malik blamed Al-Ḥajjāj for his savage barbarism and ordered him to deliver immediately the dead body of Ibn az-Zubair to his mother. Al-Ḥajjāj obeyed his master and Asmā' having washed with pious care the dead body of her son buried it at Al-Ḥajūn[4].

Al-Ḥajjāj, who never forgave his enemy nor his relatives, ordered the old mother one day to pay him a visit. The proud

1. ''Ansāb', Pp. 67.
   Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 852.
   Ibn al-Athīr, Vol. IV, Pp. 292.

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2. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 852.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. II, Pp. 325.
3. ''Ansāb', Pp. 66.
4. ''Ansāb', Pp. 57-60 and 62.
   'Aghānī', Vol. XIII, Pp. 44.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. VI, Pp. 290.
   Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj', Vol. III, Pp. 122.
   Ibn Baṭūṭa, 'Voyages', Vol. I, Pp. 330-331.

mother refused to comply. In vain, Al-Ḥajjāj threatened to drag her by her hair, if she failed to come. Asmā' persisted in her refusal. Thereupon, the Amīr, trembling in anger, put on his leather sandles and walked to the daughter of Abū-Bakr. "What do you think"? he asked in a wicked and sarcastic tone, "about the manner in which I treated Ibn az-Zubair"? Asmā' retorted in no less a becoming accent. "I heard the Apostle of God foretell that there would spring a butcher and an imposter from Thaqīf. The imposter was Al-Mukhtār; as to the butcher, I don't think it is any one but you". And as Al-Ḥajjāj returned, he repeated, "I am the butcher of the imposters". "You are their herald", said the old mother[1]. The brave woman only survived her son a few weeks[2].

Thus ended the rule of Ibn az-Zubair, who for nine long years held the title and also part of the real power of Caliph. The sway that he held in Arabia proper in the West and 'Irāq and Khurāsān in the East was over. What caused the failure of 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair, in fact, was not the lack of loyalty from his followers and partisans. It was due to his own weakness as a leader. And, on the contrary, what occasioned the success of Al-Ḥajjāj, was his ruthless and daring boldness to pursue his object notwithstanding the adversely critical and objectionable means that he adopted to secure it. 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair on the other hand was a man of homely virtues and personal courage. He lacked the moral energy and initiative necessary for a leader of men. His passive approach from the very beginning deterred his followers from following him unhesitatingly and they deserted him as they came to know him better. They saw in their opponent a terrible man of action and indefatigable courage and became disheartened when they saw their leader let opportunities slip by, when with a little more tact and confidence, he could establish a dynasty and oust the Umayyads from power. Where 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair failed, Al-Ḥajjāj won.

1. ''Ansāb', Pp. 61-62.
Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. II, Pp. 325.
Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj', Vol. III, Pp. 122.
Ibn al-Athīr. 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, Pp. 293-294.

2 Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp 847.
Ibn al-Athīr, 'Usud al Ghāba', Vol. V, Pp. 393.

IV

AL-ḤAJJĀJ AS GOVERNOR

After the death of 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair Al-Ḥajjāj was appointed Governor of Mecca in 73 A.H. He was also given the charge of Medīna after five months. As Governor of Ḥijāz, Al-Ḥajjāj reduced the opposition of the Medinites. The power of the second great opposition to the Umayyad Caliphate was considerably broken. Al-Ḥajjāj remained Governor of Ḥijāz for two years. He also reconstructed the holy Ka'ba during this period.

Governor of Ḥijāz, Yemen and Yamāma

With the death of 'Abdullah ibn az-Zubair, the confines of the holy places passed on to the Umayyads. In view of their past services, 'Abdul Malik appointed Al-Ḥajjāj Governor of Mecca, and Ṭāriq ibn 'Amr of Medīna[1]. The former was also given the charge of Yemen and Yamāma (73 A.H., 692 A.D.). In 'Irāq, Bishr ibn Marwān, brother of the Caliph, and Governor of Kūfa also became the Governor of Baṣra[2].

Al-Ḥajjāj who had just succeeded in defeating a strong and powerful enemy in the heart of the holy city did not like to see a revival of the shattered forces, in whatever form it be in the future. He, thereupon, launched a policy strictly avengeful. In his desire to punish the men who had disagreed and opposed him or his master, he was only checked by the restraining influence of the Caliph.

The first person on whom Al-Ḥajjāj's eye fell for such a purpose was 'Urwah ibn az-Zubair, the brother of 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair. After the death of 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair, he had mounted a swift-paced camel and reached Damascus. He was the first to announce to the Caliph the victory of his generals over his vanquished brother and had received 'safety' from 'Abdul Malik. Al-Ḥajjāj,

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 852
2. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp 853-854.
   Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, Pp. 122.

was greatly incensed at his escape. In his opinion, the sum of ten million dirhems that he had found in the imperial coffers of Ibn az-Zubair was an insufficient amount. He wrote a letter to the Caliph in which he criticised 'Urwah ibn az-Zubair of being in possession of his brother's wealth and requested the Prince of Believers to send 'Urwah ibn az-Zubair, in order to recover from him the treasures that did not belong to him. 'Abdul Malik refused to send 'Urwah ibn az-Zubair. Al-Ḥajjāj, however, persisted in his request. His first letter was followed by several others in which he solicited with such cleverness and force that the Caliph was on the point of granting his request when 'Urwah ibn az-Zubair recognised in the Caliph's attitude a change towards him. He, therefore, approached 'Abdul Malik and during an audience said to him, "It is not a despicable person ('Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair) that you got killed but you have given power to a very abject man". This unexpected parallel between Ibn az-Zubair and Al-Ḥajjāj made the Caliph think over the matter and revoke his earlier decision. He, therefore, ordered his Governor to be quiet about 'Urwah and instructed him to see that his ('Urwah's) life and property were not touched[1]. Al-Ḥajjāj accepted the order of the Caliph and did not pursue the matter any further.

Al-Ḥajjāj personally supervised the Ḥajj for the years 73 and 74 A.H. successively and during these two years the ceremonies were gone through completely and not left in halves as during the siege of Mecca[2]. It was due to the victory of Syrian forces that the Ḥajj of the year 73 A.H. did not manifest the disunity of Islām as evinced in 71 A.H. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi states that the year 73 A.H. was the year of unity[3]. In 71 A.H. four standards representing four different factions were displayed at 'Arafat during the Ḥajj. One belonged to 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair; the second to 'Abdul Malik; the third to Muḥammed ibn al-Ḥanefiah and the fourth to the Khārijites and round each flag were gathered its partisans who had pledged to remain peaceful during the sacred festival. Al-Ḥajjāj had excluded from the Ḥajj the particular standards of

1. ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 61-63.
 Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, Pp. 120.
 Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, Pp. 291.
 Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Vol. III, Pp. 20.
2. Ibn Qutaiba, 'Ma'ārif', Pp. 173.
 Tabarī, 'Tārikh', Vol. II, Pp. 853-862.
3. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Vol. III, Pp. 16.

the dissident Shi'ites and the Khārijites who had gathered round Ka'ba for the pilgrimage. To crown his success, Al-Ḥajjāj wanted to preside over the annual pilgrimage but 'Abdul Malik, who had a partial confidence in the religious piety of his general, did not permit him to have this honour. He wrote to Al-Ḥajjāj to imitate 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar in his religious devotion[1]. The latter in Al-Ḥajjāj's eyes, was neither a Thaqīfite nor an Umayyad. Moreover, he had during the siege of Mecca expressed himself against the piety of the Commander-in-Chief of the Syrians[2]. Al-Ḥajjāj, who was now given the son of Caliph 'Umar as a preceptor could hardly eschew his anger and revenge but hid his refusal under cover of formal acceptance of the Caliph's order and obeyed.

Accompanied by 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar whom he detested but being naturally aggrieved, Al-Ḥajjāj performed the pilgrimage in the year 73 A.H. as an ordinary pilgrim. He recited the 'Khuṭba' on Mount 'Arafat but remained armed during the sacred ceremony. 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar loyal to his mission reproached him. Al-Ḥajjāj unforgetful of the personal insult he had suffered instructed a soldier to throw a poisonous lance in the path of the importune Prince who had his foot seriously injured. "Who had done you this"? asked Al-Ḥajjāj. "It is you. They are your companions who cause my death", replied the Prince. A few days later 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar died of the wound[3]. Al-Ḥajjāj had cleared his way of a personal enemy.

Al-Ḥajjāj equally incited prince Khālid, son of Caliph Yazīd I into opposition. The latter, taking advantage of the pilgrimage to Mecca, sought the hand of Ramlah, a sister of Ibn az-Zubair in marriage. This action of the prince outraged the Governor who sent his chamberlain, 'Ubaidullāh ibn-Mauhab with the order to challenge the action of Khālid in rather strong words. "It did not appear appropriate for you to ask in marriage a daughter of the family of Ibn az-Zubair without consulting me. I do not understand how you dare to address yourself to the people who are unworthy of your consideration, as was declared by your grantfather Mu'āwiyah I. Do you forget that they disputed the Caliphate of your father (Yazīd I), hurled gross insults at him, and declared

1. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Ibid.
2. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. V, Pp. 41.
3. ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 71.
Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. III, Pp. 16.
Ibn Khallikān, 'Wafayāt', Vol. I, Pp. 349.

that he and your grandfather professed a wrong faith"? Khālid addressed the messenger in no less an angry tone, "If you were not inviolable being a messenger, I would have cut you into pieces and thrown your limbs at the gates of your master"[1]. At this he dismissed the messenger telling him that the authority of his master was not so great as to compel Khālid to consult him. The quarrel between Al-Ḥajjāj and Khālid became enlivened with bitter sarcasm, enjoined by invectives from poets who wrote satires against each other. Al-Ḥajjāj had made his first enemy in the royal house.

Al-Ḥajjāj was compelled to adopt a more conciliatory attitude towards the family of Caliph 'Alī and particularly Muḥammed ibn al-Ḥanefiah, the son of Caliph 'Alī. After the death of Fāṭima, his wife and daughter of the Prophet, Caliph 'Alī had married a lady of Ḥanifa clan and hence his son from her was called Muhammed ibn al-Ḥanefiah. Muhammed ibn al-Ḥanefiah having remained behind in Medīna had escaped the massacre of Karbalā. 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair had imprisoned him in the prison of 'Ārim and intended to kill him; Muḥammed escaped from the prison and took asylum in Aṭ-Ṭā'if[2]. After the death of Ibn az-Zubair, 'Abdul Malik notwithstanding the opposition of Al-Ḥajjāj for the family of Caliph 'Alī, instructed his Governor not to exercise excessive authority over Muḥammed ibn al-Ḥanefiah. Ibn al-Athīr[3] says that Al-Ḥajjāj wanted to put Muḥammed ibn al-Ḥanefiah to torture at Mecca and Mas'ūdī adds the following anecdote. Al-Ḥajjāj met Muḥammed ibn al-Ḥanefiah during the pilgrimage around Ka'ba and said to him in anger, "The Prince of Believers has deprived me of all authority over you". Muḥammed replied, "Thank God! Do you know that God throws 360 glances over this world? He has directed one of these glances over me and will be kind to me. Therefore, He has allowed no authority over me either to your tongue or to your hand"[4]. Taking a hint from the political sagacity of his master, Al-Ḥajjāj reconciled himself to the order of the Caliph and looked for an opportunity whereby he could strengthen the hands of his master by personal bonds. Later as Amīr of Medīna, Al-Ḥajjāj married in the family of Caliph 'Alī.

1. 'Aghānī', Vol. XVI, Pp. 88-89.
2. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, Pp. 85.
3. 'Kāmil', Vol. V, Pp. 209.
4. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, Pp. 123.

At the beginning of the year 74 A.H. (693 A.D.), Ṭarīq ibn 'Amr, Governor of Medīna for the last five months was dismissed by Caliph 'Abdul Malik. Al Ḥajjāj who was appointed Governor of Mecca in 73 A.H. was now invested with the charge of Medīna too[1].

Al-Ḥajjāj went to Medīna as its Governor in the month of Ṣafar of the same year. Arab chronicles are not at accord on the length of stay of Al-Ḥajjāj at Medīna. Ṭabarī[2] gives two versions of a month and three months. Ibn al-Athīr[3] and Balādhurī[4] concur in their opinions and state that Al-Ḥajjāj stayed at Medīna for a month or two. Al-Ḥajjāj's stay at Medīna was, however, very brief.

During his stay here, Al-Ḥajjāj treated the inhabitants with great severity and punished them cruelly for their slightest faults. His punishment was not confined to the common people; the notables also did not escape his severity[5]. He was vindictive as in the case of the Companions of the Prophet. Balādhurī, Ṭabarī and ibn al-Athīr[6] give the names of three Companions of the Prophet who were branded on their skins. The first of the Companions was Jābir ibn 'Abdullāh from amongst the Anṣārs, who was branded on his hand. The second was Anas ibn Mālik. The third was Sahl ibn Sa'd. Al-Ḥajjāj called this old man of 89 years and said to him, "What prevented you from coming to the help of the Prince of Believers, 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān"? "But I have helped him" said he. "You are telling a lie", shouted Al-Ḥajjāj and he was branded in his neck with lead. When the Caliph learnt of these punishments he intervened and forced his Governor to suspend such cruel punishments[7].

Al-Ḥajjāj equally disliked the piety and religious fervour of

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 854.
2. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 854.
3. 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, Pp. 292.
4. ' 'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 67.
5. ' 'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 67.
   Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol II, Pp. 854.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, Pp. 292.
7. ' 'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 67.
   'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 854.
   'Usud al Ghāba', Vol. II, Pp. 366.
6. Balādhurī, ' 'Ansāb', Pp 67.
   Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 854-855.
   Ibn al Athīr, 'Usud al Ghāba', Vol. I, Pp 127-128 and Vol. II, Pp. 366
   Ibn Qutaiba, 'Ma'ārif', Pp. 133-134.

the pepole of Medīna. When he saw the pious inhabitants of this city going round the pulpit and the grave of the Prophet, he cried out, "What are they doing, if not going out round a few pieces of wood and old rotten bones"[1]? Al-Ḥajjāj's impiety in chastising the Companions of the Prophet, and disrespecting the Apostle of God in his holy remains discredited him in the eyes of the people of Ḥijāz, who considered him sacrilegious[2]. They had already attributed the death of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar to him[3].

The opinion of the inhabitants of Ḥijāz about the Governor and his master is explicit from the following anecdote. Al-Ḥajjāj met one day an Arab of the desert, at a shooting party, in the vicinity of Medīna. The Arab was grazing his camel. "What do you think" asked Al-Ḥajjāj of the shepherd, "of the behaviour of your Amīr"? "He is violent and oppressive", replied the Arab. "May God take his life"! "But why don't you complain against him to the Caliph"? asked Al-Ḥajjāj. "Because he is still more violent and despotic than his Amīr". Al-Ḥajjāj's cavalry men, on a little signal from him, surrounded the shepherd and made him a prisoner. "Who is then this man"? asked the captive on the way. "He is Al-Ḥajjāj", they replied. Pressing his horse close to the Governor, the Arab said, "O Al-Ḥajjāj"! "What do you want, Beduin"? asked Ḥajjāj. "I want that the secret of the conversation we've had, should not be divulged[4]. Al-Ḥajjāj, who appreciated his frankness laughed and set the Beduin at liberty.

As Amīr of Medīna, Al-Ḥajjāj married Umm Kulthūm, a woman of Banū Hāshim, daughter of 'Abdullāh ibn Ja'far ibn Abī Ṭālib. The father of the lady who was compelled to marry his daughter to Al-Ḥajjāj soon wrote to Prince Khālid. Khālid found it opportune to take his revenge on Al-Ḥajjāj. But as Al-Ḥajjāj had contracted this marriage with the permission of the Caliph, Khālid approached the Caliph at midnight and said, "Do you know that the feelings of hostility and hatred that divided the two clans of Ibn az-Zubair and Abū Sufyān have ceased to exist"? "No", replied the Caliph. "My marriage with a daughter of the

1. Mubarrad, 'Kamil', Vol. IV, P. 127.
Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 292.
2. 'Aghānī', Vol. VI, P. 31.
3. "Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 71.
Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd', Vol. III, P. 16.
Ibn Khallikan, 'Wafayāt', Vol. I, P. 349.
4. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd', Vol. II, P. 122.

family of Ibn az-Zubair changed my mind in their respect and now no family is dearer to me than theirs", replied Khālid. The Caliph admitted the truth of Khālid's words and said, "What you say is correct". "If it is so", replied Khālid, "How do you then give so much of your power to Al-Ḥajjāj to marry a daughter of Banū Hāshim when you know about their pretensions as well as of their followers"[1]? Convinced that he had committed a political mistake in permitting this marriage, 'Abdul Malik wrote to the Governor to divorce this woman forthwith and swore to reduce him to the state of a eunuch if he dared to touch her. He also ordered Al-Ḥajjāj to pay back the dower money to the father of the lady[2]. Al-Ḥajjāj obeyed[3]. But when the visitors came to console him in his misery, he uttered some bitter invectives against Khālid and the despotic ruling of Banū Umayyah. In his anger mixed with despise, he declared that he would compensate by marrying a woman on whom no one would claim any authority. He, therefore, married Umm al Julās, daughter of 'Abdullāh ibn Khālid ibn Asīd[4]. Mas'ūdī says that Al-Ḥajjāj married the daughter of 'Abdullāh only to humiliate the family of Abū-Ṭālib[5]. In the nature of the talk reported above and Al-Ḥajjāj's subsequent reaction to the order of the Caliph, we cannot subscribe to the opinion of Mas'ūdī. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi says that 'Abdul Malik permitted Al-Ḥajjāj to marry a lady of Banū Hāshim so as to prevent him from committing any cruelty against the family of Caliph 'Alī and specially against Muḥammed ibn al-Ḥanefiah[6]. Al-Ḥajjāj, it appears, married Umm Kulthūm to please his master and strengthen his hands against the supporters of 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair. The Caliph had equally approved of this relation and given his permission. But apprehending Prince Khālid reconciling himself with the family of Ibn az-Zubair by his marriage with Ramlah, he thought it politically expedient to order the dissolution of the marriage of Al-Ḥajjāj with Umm Kulthum. He could not afford to see that the son of Yazīd I

1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Pp. 197-198.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Vol. III, P. 292.
2. 'Aghānī', Vol. XIII, P. 107.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Vol. I, P. 146 and Vol. III, P. 292.
3. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 198.
   'Aghānī', Vol. XIII, P. 107.
4. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 198.
5. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, P. 178.
6. ' 'Iqd', Vol. II, P. 317.

should revive the family dissensions that the Harbites had lost at the battle of Marj Rāhiṭ. 'Abdul Malik's father Marwān ibn al Ḥakam had married the widow of Yazīd I to reconcile the partisans of her son Khālid. Al-Ḥajjāj who perceived the political disadvantages following his marriage outweighing his master's earlier consideration for the family of Caliph 'Ali, resigned once more to his master's orders and remained quiet. Placed in the situation as he was, he could have objected to the Caliph's order or resign and persist in the personal alliance he had made, but the prudent Governor carried out his master's orders and divorced Umm Kulthūm. Before returning to Mecca, Al-Ḥajjāj built a mosque in the quarter of Banū Salima, in Medīna[1].

Returning to Mecca, Al-Ḥajjāj ordered the reconstruction of the holy Ka'ba. This edifice had been rebuilt by the Quraish five years before the birth of the Prophet[2]. Battered and ruined in 64 A.H. (683 A.D.) by the catapults of the Syrian army which besieged Mecca, it was demolished by the orders of Ibn az-Zubair and rebuilt in the year 65 A.H. (684 A.D.), when this town became the Capital of the counter-Caliphate of Ibn az-Zubair. Ibn az-Zubair enlarged the dimensions of the previous Ka'ba by seven cubits, giving thus to the edifice the area it had, when it was first built by Ibrāhīm and his son Ismā'īl. "The Ka'ba built by Ibn az-Zubair had the shape of a heel". Two doors gave access to it : one to the north-east for entrance and the other to the south-west for exit. The black stone was placed in the interior[3]. According to Mas'udī, the new Ka'ba was decorated with mosaic and three magnificent marble columns, ornamented with gold and colours, plundered from a Christian Church erected at Ṣan'ā, in Yemen by Abraha, the Abysinian"[4].

The Ka'ba constructed by Ibn az-Zubair remained unchanged for eight years. Al-Ḥajjāj, who had seriously damaged it during the last siege, wished to rebuild the broken walls but by orders of 'Abdul Malik, from whom he had sought advice, he again

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 854.
2. Ibn Qutaiba, 'Ma'ārif', P 244.
3. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 529 and 854.
   Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, P. 92.
4. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj', Ibid. Abraha king of Abysinia tried to conquer Mecca in the year 570—the year of the birth of the Prophet. He left with thirteen elephants but after a legend, the elephant called Muhammed that he rode, refused to advance towards the holy city and Abraha returned immediately.

demolished the edifice entirely. Then, he rebuilt it on the foundations dug before the Prophet by the family of Quraish. But not happy to give to the Ka'ba the shape it received from the Quraish, and which was like that of a parallelogram, Al-Ḥajjāj reduced the length of the seven cubits of the dimensions of the edifice of Ibn az-Zubair, leaving to it but one door and placing the black stone in the exterior (74-693). He did the opposite of all what his rival (Ibn az-Zubair) had done; it was still vengeance"[1].

During the Jāhiliyyah, reports Balādhurī, the cloth covering of the Ka'ba consisted of leather carpets and cloth from Ma'āfir (tribe of Yemen). The Prophet clothed it with the fine linen-cloth made in Egypt. Yazīd I covered it with an embroidered silken stuff, called 'khusrawānī'. Ibn az-Zubair and after him Al-Ḥajjāj also used silken cloth ornamented with designs to cover the Ka'ba. During a part of their reign, the Banū Umayyah used the magnificant robes that the inhabitants of Najrān (Jews and Christians) used to give as tribute"[2].

With the completion of the construction of the Ka'ba, Al-Ḥajjāj's governorship of Ḥijāz came to a close. In the year 74 A.H. (693 A.D.), he went to Damascus and by orders of the Caliph took with him Muḥammed ibn al-Ḥanefiah. Muḥammed reported to 'Abdul Malik the extreme severity of his representative Al-Ḥajjāj. The Caliph was deeply moved. He interdicted Al-Ḥajjāj from troubling the family of Caliph 'Alī and sent back the prince with honour and every mark of respect[3].

In a special meeting 'Abdul-Malik asked Al-Ḥajjāj the name of the person whom he had left in charge of Medina, in the capacity of his lieutenant. "He is 'Abdullāh ibn-Qais", replied the Governor. "You have taken your lieutenant from the most foolish family of Quraish", replied the Caliph, dissatisfied[4].

Among the men who had accompanied Al-Ḥajjāj to the court of 'Abdul Malik was his favourite Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammed ibn Ṭalḥa. Al-Ḥajjāj had chosen Ibrāhīm after the death of Ibn az-Zubair and raised him in rank. He introduced him to the Caliph and

1. Ibn Qutaiba, 'Ma'ārif', P. 244.
   Tabarī, Vol. II, P. 843.
   Mas'ūdi, 'Murūj', Vol. III, P. 92.
2. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 47.
3. " 'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 68.
4. " 'Ansāb', Ibid.

spoke of his merits laudably[1]. During the same meeting, Ibrāhīm requested the Prince of Believers to grant him a personal interview as he had to give him an important advice. 'Abdul Malik heard the request of the favourite of Al-Ḥajjāj and granted him an interview. When Al-Ḥajjāj withdrew, the curtain was dropped. Ibrāhīm gave a frightful account of the actions of Al-Ḥajjāj, holding him guilty of chastising the 'Companions' of the Prophet. He made a request to the Caliph to take pity on his unfortunate people and give them respite from such cruelties. 'Abdul Malik treated the accusations of Ibrāhīm as lies and put him in prison. Al-Ḥajjāj, who did not know what had passed, had a talk with the Caliph for the remaining part of the day. Undoubtedly, the Governor narrated his prowess, and confirmed, without doubt, the truth of the account of Ibrāhīm. Ibrāhīm was recalled at the end of the meeting and while entering he met Al-Ḥajjāj beaming with joy. Al-Ḥajjāj embraced and kissed his forehead, thanked him warmly and promised him the most laudable favours. Ibrāhīm thought he was dreaming and did not understand all these demonstrations of friendship. Confused as he was at the behaviour of Al-Ḥajjāj and his own personal complaint against him to the Caliph, he reapproached the Caliph. The Caliph told him that he was going to remove Al-Ḥajjāj from the Governorship of Ḥijāz and appointing him instead the Governor of the two 'Irāqs, for he alone in his opinion was capable of restoring order there. He added that he had convinced Al-Ḥajjāj that his promotion to the Governorship of 'Irāq was due to the amicable advice of Ibrāhīm. Then he dismissed the latter and ordered him to rejoin Al-Ḥajjāj and remain with him[2].

Mas'ūdī gives the following dramatic demonstration of the occasion of the selection of Al-Ḥajjāj. When 'Abdul Malik learnt that Al-Muhallab was left with a handful of men to fight the Azraqites, he made an appeal to the valour of the generals who surrounded him. No one took up the challenge except Al-Ḥajjāj (who was at the time at Damascus) and he requested the Caliph to send him to 'Irāq[3]. The immediate cause that compelled 'Abdul Malik, in our opinion, to replace Al-Ḥajjāj in Ḥijāz was the death of Bishr ibn Marwān in the year 74 A.H. The urgency in which

1. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd', Vol. II, Pp. 149-150.
2. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd', Vol. II, Pp. 149-150.
3. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, P. 122.

'Abdul Malik found himself, regarding the situation in 'Irāq and the menace of the Khārijites, obliged him to entrust the Province to a tried and experienced man. According to a tradition reported by Balādhurī, the news of the death of Bishr ibn Marwān reached Damascus during Al-Ḥajjāj's stay at the court of the Caliph and it was from there (Damascus) that the Governor left for 'Irāq[1]. But it is certain that Al-Ḥajjāj first returned to Ḥijāz and it was at Medīna that he received the orders from the Caliph, appointing him Governor of 'Irāq. Ibn Qutaiba[2], Ṭabarī[3] and Balādhurī[4] too, subscribe to this opinion. It is impossible to reject this unanimity of opinion.

The new Governor of 'Irāq was thirty three years old. He left Medīna in the month of Sha'bān in 75 A.H. (December 694 A.D.) accompanied by twelve Arabs mounted on swift-paced camels[5]. On leaving Medīna, Al-Ḥajjāj uttered but one of those irreverent regrets and full of hatred, which were familiar to him. "Praise be to God"! he shouted, "Who has made me go out of a furnace of seditions, whose inhabitants are the most perfidious and the most false towards the Prince of Believers and who envy him his fortune. By Allah, if I had not received the letters from the Prince of Believers in their connection, I would have rendered this city similar to the valley of Al-Ḥimār; I would have spared neither these pieces of wood which they often visit nor a corpse already consumed since long; things about which they say: It is the seat of the Apostle of God. It is the tomb of the Apostle of God"[6]. Such was his farewell to the inhabitants of Medīna whose opposition he had securely reduced and almost broken to the advantage of his master, in whose service he never wavered.

Al-Ḥajjāj had remained Governor of Ḥijāz for two years, from the death of Ibn az-Zubair to his deparature in Sha'bān 75 A.H. (December 694 A.D.)[7]. In his place, the Caliph appointed 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn-Nāfi' Governor of Mecca, and Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥakam, Governor of Medīna[8].

1. ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 69.
2. Ibn Qutaiba, 'Ma'ārif', P. 173.
3. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 863.
4. Balādhurī, ''Ansab', Ibid.
5. ''Ansāb al-ashrāf', P. 69.
   Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 863 and 872.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. II, P. 187.
6. ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 77.
7. ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 189.
8. ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 69.

Al-Hajjāj as Governor of 'Irāq

Al-Hajjāj arrived in 'Irāq in the month of Ramadān in 75 A.H. The refractory province was ripe for sedition. The soldiers of Kūfa and Basra sent against the Khārijites had dispersed. Al-Hajjāj took rigorous measures against them and established discipline in the army. He quelled the revolt of Ibn al-Jārūd and made reconciliation with Anas ibn Mālik.

His Arrival in 'Irāq

The second great opposition after the Medinites and the counter-Caliphate of 'Abdullāh Ibn az-Zubair, which the Umayyad Caliphs had to face was that of the Khārijites. This powerful party had refused the arbitration of Caliph 'Alī after the battle of Siffīn and opposed the supporters of the Caliph and Mu'āwiyah, the rebel Governor of Syria.

In the course of time, the Khārijites had come to formulate republican propensities. They desired the Caliph to be elected from the most qualified persons and withheld the right to dismiss him, if he failed to perform his functions satisfactorily. Their cry of war was, "The decision alone lies with God".

The Khārijites bore an implacable hatred to the ruling dynasty and in the course of their opposition had broken into a number of factions like the Azraqites, after their leader Nāfi' ibn al-Azraq. At the time of Caliph 'Abdul Malik, they populated the greater part of Fāris and also occupied the valley of the Tigris. Their mani preoccupation had been extension of conquest towards Khurāsān and India but they were a perpetual menace to the rich plains and the two most flourishing cities of 'Irāq, i.e. Kūfa and Basra. In view of their threat, the Caliph instructed his brother Bishr ibn Marwān, Governor of 'Irāq, to strengthen his position against the neighbouring insurgents. He ordered him to send against the Azraqites, an army of Basrians under the command of Al-Muhallab and an army of Kūfites under the command of an expert whom Bishr could choose. Bishr, who belonged to the race of Mudar, hated Al-Muhallab who was a Yemenite and whose high influence and military prowess eclipsed his mediocrity. Bishr accepted the orders, however, reluctantly and gave the command of the troops of Kūfa to 'Abdur Rahmān ibn Mikhnaf and instructed him to act independently of Al-Muhallab[1].

1. Tabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 855-857.

The two generals left with their armies. Al-Muhallab established his camp at Rāmahurmuz and 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn-Mikhnaf encamped "at a distance of a mile or a mile and a half only" from where they could see each other. They had hardly encamped for ten days facing their enemy, when they learnt of the death of Bishr ibn Marwān at Baṣra in 74 A.H. Soon after the death of Bishr ibn Marwān the soldiers of 'Irāq abandoned their flags and dispersed. The two generals were powerless to bring the fugitives back to duty[1].

At this time, Al-Muhallab, *who did not have more than a* handful of men with him, saw the province in the grip of a most complete anarchy. There was not the least sign of authority or discipline. The veteran general saw the danger that threatened the province. He wrote to the Caliph a letter full of alarm and anger, "Either send men to me or open the route of Baṣra to the enemy". 'Abdul Malik only sent him a man. It was Al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf[2].

Al-Ḥajjāj whom we left in Medīna delivering his speech full of animosity and threats, received the letters of the Caliph, ordering him to go to 'Irāq. It was under the conditions mentioned above, that Al-Ḥajjāj took the most direct route to Kūfa. He entered the city suddenly one day in the month of Ramaḍān in 75 A.H. (January 695 A.D.) quite in advance of the morning[3]. Everywhere, reports Mas'ūdī, the soldiers were seated in their homes, surrounded by their families and their freed slaves, in groups of twenty or thirty or more[4]. The sudden arrival of the Governor of 'Irāq first went unperceived and unheeded. Going straight to the principal mosque, Al-Ḥajjāj mounted the pulpit and said, "Let the people come in". Driven by curiosity, the Kūfites came in running. They saw seated an immobile and silent man; his head was covered with a red silken veil which concealed his face[5]; his sword by his side and a bow round his shoulder[6]. The people

1. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 857-859.
2. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, P. 133.
3. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 872.
4. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, P. 133.
   Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 215.
5. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 863.
   Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj', Vol. III, Pp. 133-134.
6. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 215.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. III, P. 8.

asked each other full of concern, who this strange man was. They took him and his companions for the Khārijites while he contemplated their ruin[1]. ‘Umair ibn Ḍābī al-Burjumī who had just come in, followed by his freed slave, had picked up pebbles in the court yard of the mosque to throw them at the chief of the small troops. "Wait", said someone to ‘Umair, "until we see what he is going to say"[2]. "He is oppressed and cannot speak", said the others. "He is an Arab of the desert", advanced a few others[3]. Motionless in his seat, Al-Ḥajjāj remained silent, waiting that the people should assemble. When he saw that the mosque was full[4] and all eyes were fixed on him[5], he rose quietly. He removed the veil which was hiding his face, omitted the usual proclamation, "Praise be to God" and introduced himself by citing the verse of the poet Suḥaim ibn Wathīl ar-Riyāḥī[6].

أنا ابن جلا وطلاع الثنايا - متى أضع العمامة تعرفوني

"I am he who scattereth darkness and climbeth lofty submits. As I lift the turban from my face you will know me"[7]. "O inhabitants

1. Tabarī, Ibid.
   Ibn al-Athīr, ‘Kāmil’, Vol. IV, P. 303.
2. Mubarrad, ‘Kāmil’, P. 215.
   Mas‘ūdī, ‘Murūj’, Ibid.
3. Mas‘ūdī, ‘Murūj’, Vol. III, Pp. 133-134.
4. Mas‘ūdī, Ibid.
5. Mubarrad, ‘Kāmil’, P. 215.
6. Mubarrad, Ibid.
   Ṭabarī, Vol. II, P. 863.
7. Hitti, History of the Arabs, P. 207. The full qaṣīda is as follows :—

وان مكاننا من حميرى　　مكان الليث من وسط العرين

وإنى لن يعود الى قرنى　　غداة الغب إلا فى قرين

بذى لبد يصد الركب عنه　　ولا تؤتى فريسته لحين

عذرت البزل إذ هى خاطرتنى　　فما بالى وبال ابنى لبون

وماذا تبتغى الشعراء منى　　وقد جاوزت حد الاربعين

أخو خمسين مجتمع أشدى　　وتنجذنى مداورة الشؤون

كريم الخال من سلمى نزار　　كنصل السيف وضاح الجبين

متى أحلل الى قطن وزيد　　وسلمى تكثر الأصوات دونى

وهمام متى أحلل إليه　　محل الليث فى عيص أمين

of Kūfa"! said the speaker. "I declare to you in the name of God that I will punish wickedness severely. I will pay it in its own coin. I will return evil for evil"[1].

Full of determination and purpose as he was, Al-Ḥajjāj struck the note of threat.

وإني لأرى رؤوسا قد أينعت وحان قطافها وإني لصاحبها، وإني
لأنظر إلى الدماء بين العمائم واللحى۔

"I see heads coming to their maturity and it is time to reap them; they belong to me and I already perceive rivers of blood inundating (your) turbans and (your) beards"[2]. Al-Ḥajjāj then recited the verse of Ruwaishid ibn Rumaiḍ al-'Anbarī!

هذا اوان الشد فاشتدى زيم۔ قد لفها الليل بسواق الحطم
ليس براعى ابل ولاغنم ۔ ولا بجزار على ظهر وضم
قد لفها الليل بعصلبى ۔ أروع خراج من الدوى
مهاجر ليس بأعرابى

It is the hour of battle. Defend courageously (alluding to his horse or she-camel, Zīam) the band of troops that the night has united under the charge of a relentless rider.
He (the rider) is not a shepherd of camels or of ewes; not a butcher sitting quietly on his seat of wood (evidently implying that the rider is sitting on the back of the horse).
The night has given their charge to a brave and capable person who makes admirable escapes (from danger); he is an emigrant and not a nomad Arab".

After referring to these initial preparations, Al-Ḥajjāj continued the recital to show the severity of the fight.

قد شمرت عن ساقها فشدوا ۔ وجدت الحرب بكم فجدوا
والقوس فيها وتر عرد ۔ مثل ذراع البكر أو أشد
لابد مما ليس منه بد

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 864-865.
2. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 215.

"The war has tucked up her clothes and laid bare her legs: Fight! She has become terrible for you; redouble your efforts.
For the bow-string is as hard as the shin-bone of a she-camel, if not harder.
It is, therefore, necessary to resign to the events which are inevitable"[1].
"As for me, O inhabitants of 'Irāq", said Al-Ḥajjāj to the people alluding to their weakness and his own strength, "I would never let myself be scared by the sound of the old withered goatskin. I would neither let myself be pressed as they press the figs. I have been chosen for sagacity and experience. The Prince of Believers spread his quiver before his eyes, tested its arrows and the wood that he found the most bitter and hard was mine. He then flung me on to you, for it is since long that you have persisted in rebellion and hidden in the beds of the misled. By God! I shall strip you as the wood is stripped off its bark; I shall tie you as they tie a throny bush; I shall beat you mercilessly as the she-camels which leave their flocks[2]. You resemble the inhabitants of the town who enjoyed security and calmness, and who received from all parts an abundant subsistance but showed themselves ungrateful towards the benevolence of God and were, therefore, struck by terror and famine as a prize for their actions"[3].

"But, know it well, if I promise, I keep it; if I conceive a project, I execute it; if I issue orders, I see that they are carried out"[4]. "The Prince of Believers has ordered me to distribute to you your balances and to send you to fight your enemies under the command of Al-Muhallab ibn Abī Ṣufrah. I, therefore, take a solemn and holy oath in the presence of God that anyone whom I find delaying his departure, three days after he has received his balance, shall have his neck cut. Besides I shall deliver his property to pillage". And then turning to the attendant said, "Attendant! Read the message of the Prince of Believers to the people". The young man then read as follows: "In the name of God the Merciful and Kind, the servant of God, 'Abdul-Malik

1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 215.
2 Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 219.
3. Qur'ān, XVI, P. 113.
4. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 492.
Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 867.

sends his greetings to the Musalmāns of Kūfa". No one opened his mouth to return the greetings of the Caliph as was the custom. "Stop, attendant", said the Governor; trembling in anger and then turning towards the people said "The Prince of Believers greets you, and you do not return to him the greetings ? This is the politeness of Ibn Nihya[1]. But I shall teach you another politeness, if you don't behave well. Attendant ! Continue reading the message of the Prince of Believers". This time when the speaker arrived at the words : "Greetings to you", all the assembly frightened by the terrible and frightful expression on the face of Al-Ḥajjāj, repeated in one voice, "And Greetings to the Prince of Believers and the mercy of God"[2].

Then, without adding anything to these words, adds Ṭabarī, Al-Ḥajjāj descended from the pulpit and regained his seat[3]. Then without losing a minute, he ordered the men to come and receive their balance while he presided over this distribution[4]. And as Al-Ḥajjāj did not want to squander the money of the treasury or maintain a new army of deserters, he recalled the military inspectors and ordered them to go to Al-Muhallab and ask him for letters testifying the arrival of the troops before the enemy. The guards of the Euphrates' bridge received the orders to leave the gates of the bridge open day and night"[5].

Al-Ḥajjāj then looked for a commander of the police. He wanted to confide this work to a severe and stern man. 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn 'Ubaid, the Tamīmite, appeared to be of such a mettle. Al-Ḥajjāj then called him and acquainted him with his intentions. "I only accept this charge", declared Tamīm, "On one condition, i.e. you free me of the solicitations of your administrators, of your children and your escort". "Attendant" said Al-Ḥajjāj, "Make the following proclamation loudly : "Anyone

1. Ibn Nihya was an old chief of the police at Baṣra.
   Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 870.
   Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj', Vol. III, Pp. 135-136.

2. Mas'ūdī, Ibid.

3. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, P. 865.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 305.

4. Mubarrad, P. 216.

5. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, P. 866.
   Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj', Vol. III, Pp. 137-138.

who dares to address an application to the Commander will be outlawed"[1].

'Abdur Rahmān ibn 'Ubaid as well as the captain of the guards of Al-Hajjāj received the orders to take up their swords at the expiry of three days and to use them like batons[2].

When the third day arrived, there was a great excitement in the city; an expression of fear and anger that might turn the people to sedition and revolt. Al-Hajjāj was in his palace, when he heard from the direction of the market a hushed rumour in which the cry of the decisive hours prevailed, "Allāh Akbar". Without hesitation, he went to the mosque and ascended the pulpit. He began to address the people in words full of gross insults and menaces. "People of 'Irāq, men of discord and hypocrisy, men of mischievous nature. I heard a 'Takbir' which is not of the nature by which we attract God but draw menaces. Yes, I have understood that it was a tumultuous populace excited by a wind of storm. Children of abject women, slaves of batons! Is there anyone among you who can measure his steps by the infirmity of his legs? Is there no one amongst you who can spare his blood and see the place where he steps on? I take an oath in the presence of God. I am on the point of cutting a neck which will be an examplary punishment of the past and the future, a lesson of knowing how to live"[3].

Al-Hajjāj kept his word. The same day he went to the camp to review the troops. One of the notables of Kūfa, 'Umair ibn Dābī, the Tamīmite, the Burjumite, who was a member of the army destined to Al-Muhallab dared to ask the Governor, while passing before him in the review, to relieve him of his services. "May God protect the Amīr"! said he "I am but a poor old man, weighed down by age and infirmity, however, recruited in this army. My son Hanzala who has no equal in force and vigour among the Banū Tamīm, is here with me; if you judge it proper to send him to war, do it". "By God"! said Al-Hajjāj, pointing to the

1. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd', Vol. III, P. 9.
2. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 665.
3. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 152.
Balādhurī, 'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 271.
Tabarī, Vol. II, P. 868.
Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd', Vol. II, P. 185.

son, "He is better for us than his father". And he was going to agree to the exchange or had already accepted it when 'Anbasa ibn Sa'īd, his friend and his counsellor said to him, "Do you know this man"? "No", replied Al-Ḥajjāj. "He is 'Umair ibn Ḍābī, the Tamīmite, Burjumite, one of the murderers of the Prince of Believers, 'Uthmān". "Old man". cried Al-Ḥajjāj irritated, "Is it you, who leapt on the corpse of 'Uthmān, Prince of Believers and cracked his two ribs"? "He had", replied 'Umair, "imprisoned and starved my old father in a cell". "Yes", replied the Governor, "but did'nt your father say: I was determined to pursue my project but did not succeed. O that I could see the women of 'Uthmān bemoan his death[1]! I think, O old man! that your death will be good for the two cities of Kūfa and Baṣra. O Enemy of God! you will be despatched to compensate for the Prince of Believers, 'Uthmān". And he surveyed him, says Mas'ūdī, from head to foot, biting the beard and almost leaving him to fall. Then he approached him and said, "'Umair, have you heard what I said from the pulpit"? "Yes", replied the old man. "Well it would be shameful for a man like me to correct himself. Guard, get up and cut his neck"! A man rose immediately and executed the orders. Then the properties of 'Umair were looted[2]. Aghānī adds that the Burājim belonging to the tribe to which 'Umair belonged came to see the dead body of their unfortunate companion. Al-Ḥajjāj heard them advance in uproar. He shouted to his guards: "Throw to them the head of 'Umair". They threw to them the bleeding head and these men, struck with horror and fear, took to flight[3]. It was the signal of the general departure of the Kūfites. The soldiers, till then hesitant, outdistanced them to take possession of the bridge of boats, which linked the two banks of the Euphrates and went to join Al-Muhallab. The rush on the bridge was so big, the crowd so pressing that many fell in the

1. 'Umair's father Ḍābī ibn al-Ḥārith wished to murder 'Uthman but his plan was discovered and it was then that he composed this verse:

Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 219.

2. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Pp. 216-217 and 665.
Balādhurī, ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 274-275.
Ṭabarī, Vol. II, P. 869.

3. 'Aghānī', Vol. XIII, P. 42.
Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj', Vol. III, P. 135.

river and were drowned[1].

It was now the reign of terror. Al-Ḥajjāj, whom the chronicles represent as the "Issue of Thamūd", the most wicked of the Arab tribes, had thus, in spite of his puny appearance, overpowered the weakness, the obstinacy and all the resistance of a people, with a will that brooked no opposition.

A certain Ibrahīm ibn 'Āmir of the tribe of Banū Asad, met a man called 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zabīr, who also belonged to this tribe and who had fled from Kūfa. Ibrāhīm asked him what the news was: "Bad, Bad", shouted 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zabīr, "one of the soldiers of Al-Muhallab, has just been executed"[2]. Then he recited this verse :—

أقول لإبراهيم لما لقيته   أرى الأمر أمسى مهلكا متعصبا

تخيّر فإما أن تزور ابن ضابئ   عميرا وإما أن تزور المهلبا

هما خطتا خسف نجاءك منهما   ركوبك حوليا من الثلج أشهبا

فأضحى ولو كانت خراسان دونه   رآها مكان السوق أو هي أقربا

وإلا فما الحجاج مغمد سيفه   مدى الدهر حتى يترك الطفل اشيبا

"I said to Ibrāhīm when I met him: I see that the situation is becoming painful and embarrassing.
Choose, either you will visit 'Umair, son of Ḍābī (in the other world) or you will pay a visit to Al-Muhallab.
Two alternatives that you cannot escape but by leaping on the back of an agile horse, fairer than snow;
And who even after having left Khurāsān behind him, considers this road as short as that of the market or shorter still.
For I do not believe that Al-Ḥajjāj ever returns his sword to the sheath, so long as he has not turned the head of children grey"[3].

1. 'Aghānī', Ibid
   Ṭabarī, Vol. II, P. 870.
2. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj', Vol. III, Pp. 137-138.
3. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 666.
   Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj', Vol. III. Pp. 137-138.
   Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 871-872
   "Ansāb al-Ashrāf", Pp. 272-273.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. III, P. 9.
   'Aghānī', Vol. XIII, P. 42.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 307.

According to Mas'ūdī, the soldiers of Kūfa, after having crossed the Euphrates, still tried to find a refuge in the plains of Sawād, from where they asked food for their families, in order to subsist in their retreat. But Al-Ḥajjāj ordered the guardian of the bridge to permit access to them and prevent any one recross the river[1]. Then these men, deprived of the necessary help and becoming desperate to obtain it, entered in mass the camp of Muhallab, who was at Ramāhurmuz facing the Khārijites[2]. The inspectors that Al-Ḥajjāj had sent before to the chief of the staff received from him letters testifying the arrival of militia men at their posts. No soldier was allowed to appeal to him. Full of admiration Al-Muhallab said, "To-day an energetic man has arrived in 'Irāq; today the war has been declared on the enemy"[3].

After leaving the administration of Kūfa to Abū-Ya'fur 'Urwah ibn al-Mughīrah ibn Shu'ba, Al-Ḥajjāj went to Baṣra to see the things for himself there. Here again, he delivered threatening speeches and repeated his menaces with redoubled vigour. A man of Banū Yashkur was brought before him[4]; he was old, "broken and one-eyed", surnamed Dhū'l-Kursufah "the man with a tuft", because he covered the eye he had lost with a tuft of cotton[5]. "Here is a rebel"[6], said they to the Governor. "I have been suffering from hernia that Bishr saw himself, and because of which he relieved me of the military service. Here is the rest of my balance which must go to the treasury"[7]. "I know", said Al-Ḥajjāj "that you are telling the truth". And without any other explanation he got his head cut[8].

1. Mas'ūdī, Vol. III, Pp. 137-138.
2. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, P. 870.
3. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, P. 870.
   ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 275.
   Mas'ūdī, Vol. III, Pp. 137-138.
4. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, P. 873.
5. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 666.
   Ṭabarī, Ibid.
6. Here is a man who has refused to rejoin the army.
7. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, P. 873.
8. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 666.
   Ṭabarī, Ibid.

According to Mubarrad, another soldier, equally accused of escaping the perils and the fatigues of the war, was brought before Al-Ḥajjāj while he was taking his meals. The Governor immediately ordered his neck to be cut and as the guests, who were taking their meals with Al-Ḥajjāj, felt aggrieved and disgusted at what they saw, they lost all appetite and stopped eating. Al-Ḥajjāj considered them cowards and reproached them[1]. Thus terror struck the inhabitants of Baṣra as it had struck the people of Kūfa. Like the Kūfites they left the city with such haste and precipitation, reports Ṭabarī, that the passers-by who happened to be on the bridge of Rāmahurmuz were trampled. And Al-Muhallab said, "Here comes an energetic man to command these men"[2].

Such was the rigorous but effective method that Al-Ḥajjāj adopted to revive discipline in the Arab armies. He was the first to give capital punishment to those who tried to escape from military service. Caliphs 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Alī were contented to decide that the deserter should no more wear the turban and that he should be exposed on the pillory. Muṣ'ab finding this punishment insufficient ordered in addition the hair and beard of the culprit to be cut. Soon these punishments used for disparaging the wrong doer became useless. The feeling of honour had weakened and the aversion for military service had taken alarming proportions. Bishr aggravated the affliction. He used to nail to the wall the hands of the deserter, after having him lifted from the ground. Al-Ḥajjāj, finding that all this was a plaything, was still more expeditious. He beheaded the culprits[3]. The terror and the gloom which spread over the two cities in the wake of these punishments drove men to their duty. Al-Ḥajjāj had succeeded in his purpose, whereas a weaker man would have badly failed or lost his head.

The Mutiny of Rustaqabādh (The Revolt of Ibn al-Jārūd)

Al-Ḥajjāj had succeeded in bringing back to duty the militia of the two big cities of 'Irāq but he was little assured of their constancy. He, therefore, took with him the troops which remained with him, consisting mostly of the nobility of Baṣra and left

1. Mubarrad, P. 666.
   Ṭabarī, Vol. II, P. 873.
2. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 873-874.
3. Ibn al-Athīr, Vol. IV, P. 308.

this city. He crossed the Euphrates and encamped at Rustaqabādh, a small village famous in the wars of the Khārijites, situated to the east of Baṣra and eighteen "Farasakhs" from the camp of Al-Muhallab. The intention of the Governor was to fortify the rear-guard of Al-Muhallab and to encourage him and his forces in their difficult campaign in Fāris against the Khārijites. At the same time Al-Ḥajjāj desired to weaken the strength of the nobles and prevent them from forming any community with the people against him. Aware of their danger, he pressed them in the fight against the Khārijites and in their own interests exhorted them to defend their country. In a speech addressed to the soldiers, he acquainted them with his resolution in these words: "People of the two great cities, this place will be yours month after month and year after year, until God has destroyed your enemies, the Khārijites, who constitute a permanent menace hanging over your heads"[1]. And with such words Al-Ḥajjāj induced them to face the enemy.

Everything was going on according to the wishes of the Governor, when he uttered in his speech, a little after, an untimely threat which risked to bring back things to the point they were before his arrival in 'Irāq. "The increase in pay accepted in your favour by Ibn az-Zubair", said he to the militia, "is the work of a miscreant and hypocrite. I shall not maintain it". This was enough to stir the angry emotions of the nobles, who possessed a fat living and were secure in the strength of their manpower. Hit in their turn by this severe move of the Governor, aimed at weakening their economic stability and reimbursing the State Treasury, the nobles as custodians of the militia protested. "It is wrong", replied one of the notables, who named himself as 'Abdullāh ibn al-Jārūd al-'Abdī "that this increase is the work of a miscreant and hypocrite, because it was approved and ratified by the Prince of the Believers 'Abdul Malik and put into force by Bishr ibn Marwān, his brother". The Governor having nothing to reply at the moment, threatened to cut the neck of the intruder[2].

But soon the question was raised with all its seriousness. Al-Ḥajjāj who had the mind to break the power of the overgrown

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 874.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 309.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 874.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 309.
   Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 281.

towns of Baṣra and Kūfa, refused to accept the claims of the soldiers about their remunerations and Ibn al-Jārūd gave the same offending reply. His views were shared by the other notables who met at his house. The principal among them were Al-Hudhail ibn 'Imrān al-Burjumī, 'Abdullāh ibn Ḥakīm and Qutaiba ibn Muslim, the future conqueror of Transoxiana. They unanimously approved the words and disapprobations of Ibn al-Jārūd. "We stand by you to support you, because this man will not rest until he cancels the increase of our balance. Come, we pledge to you our loyalty to expel him from 'Irāq. Later we will write to 'Abdul Malik asking him to replace the Governor. If the Caliph refuses, we will depose him, but he will not refuse because he is afraid of us, as long as the Khārijites are not destroyed". Then the nobility and other respectable people who were in this army, took the oath in secret accepting Ibn al-Jārūd as their leader and pledged to help one another and defend mutually[1].

The revolt broke out on the morning in the month of Rabī', in the year 76 A.H. (July 695 A.D.). All the soldiers of the army had rallied under the standard of Ibn al-Jārūd. Nobody remained with the Governor except his favourites and the inmates of his house. To add to his misfortunes, he was separated from his treasury and his arsenal by the lines of the rebels. In this critical situation, Al-Ḥajjāj sent for the chief of the rebels to come and speak to him. "Who commands here"? shouted Ibn al-Jārūd. "I absolutely refuse to go there. . . Let him get away from us, charged with our blames and reprobation, otherwise we will attack him". To the threats that A'yān, freed slave of Sa'd ibn Abī-Waqqāṣ, addressed him, by the order of the Governor, the rebel leader said, "If you were not a messenger, I would have killed you, O son of an infamous mother"! Then, on the signal of Ibn al-Jārūd, he was held by his shoulders thrown outside. Al-Ḥajjāj's move to win back the rebels at this late hour proved abortive.

The seditious forces marched in battle in his direction. Their design was to drive him away from their country and not to fight him. But the Governor did not oppose them nor take to flight. The rebels entered his tent and carried away his furniture and horses. The soldiers of Yemen kidnapped his first wife, who was the daughter of An-Nu'mān ibn Bashīr, and the soldiers of Muḍar

1. Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kamil', Vol. IV, P. 309.

his second wife, Umm Salima, daughter of 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn 'Amr. "But the senseless", says Ibn al-Athīr, "were struck with fear and returned without even having dared to touch the person of Al-Ḥajjāj"[1].

The unity of the forces against the Governor was shortlived. In view of the consequences that might follow their revolt, a section of the inhabitants of Basra separated themselves from Ibn al-Jārūd and went to make their submission to the Governor of 'Irāq. At this first deflection, the poet Al-Ghadbān uttered:

تعش بالجدى قبل أن يتغدى بك "Eat the kid before it eats you",

to the rebel chief and insisted that the attack should be made the same day, for fear of the weak men, who might swell the ranks of the Governor in the cover of the night. Ibn al-Jārūd replied that he could not permit the adventure so early but that the next day at dawn he would make the onslaught on the enemy. It was a mistake difficult to repair[2].

In the meantime, Al-Ḥajjāj who never let his courage fail under any circumstances, consulted two of his faithful officers. Seeing the small force at the command of the Governor, Ziyād ibn 'Amr al-'Atakī advised him to ask for safety from the rebel leader and to take refuge before 'Abdul Malik. The second adviser 'Uthmān, on the other hand, told his chief that his interests and his power were those of the Prince of Believers himself. He reminded him of the favours that the Caliph had bestowed upon him and asked him to make an appeal first to the Government of the holy cities, then to 'Irāq. He added that if he returned to Syria in such circumstances, after having attained the highest dignity to which he could aspire, he would never obtain an equal favour from 'Abdul Malik. 'Uthmān concluded by saying that a capitulation by Al-Ḥajjāj would be a shameful approach. He should either attack to extract victory or find a glorious death on the battlefield. "Your advice is better", said the Governor. 'Uthmān had harped the strings of his life at this moment. Al-Ḥajjāj felt reassured. He tried to negotiate with the rebels for a second time. He then sent his messengers to win over three rebel leaders to his

1. 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 310.

2. Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 410.
Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 281.

side, but the attempt failed like the first one. This apparent strength of the rebel leader soon gave way.

Ibn al-Jārūd who had failed to listen to the advice of Al-Ghaḍbān equally failed to win over the other rebel leaders to his side. When a certain 'Abbād ibn al Ḥuṣain al-Ḥabaṭī visited his house. Ibn al-Jārūd was holding secret discussions with Al-Hudhail ibn 'Imrān and 'Abdullāh ibn Ḥakīm. 'Abbād asked them to allow him to join their confidential talk. "God forbid"! they said, "that a man of Banū al-Ḥabaṭ should be ever in our private talks". 'Abbād offended at this disdain, went over to the camp of Al-Ḥajjāj, with hundred men.

Whereas Ibn al-Jārūd had failed to overcome clanish jealousies and internecine feuds, so native to the Arab mind, the clever Governor made good the loss of the enemy and said to 'Abbād, "I am not anxious about those who remain behind because you are no more with them". Soon after, Qutaiba ibn Muslim with his men also joined the army of Al-Ḥajjāj. During the night some other warriors also followed these examples[1]. One of the rebel chiefs, Misma' ibn Mālik, repenting his fault, remained in the camp of Ibn al-Jārūd and promised to help Al-Ḥajjāj. In the morning he lined his 6,000 soldiers in a battle array, "What side do you take"? asked Ibn al-Jārūd struck by the fear of one of his officers. "You missed the opportunity yesterday when Al-Ghaḍbān said to you, 'Eat the kid before it eats you'. Now it is too late to fight steadfastly"[2]. At these words Ibn al-Jārūd wore his armour and advanced towards the enemy.

The right wing of Ibn al-Jārūd was commanded by Al-Hudhail ibn 'Imrān and the left by 'Ubaidullāh ibn-Ziyād. Al-Ḥajjāj placed Qutaiba Ibn Muslim on his right and Sa'īd ibn Aslam on the left. He then addressed his troops and exhorted them to fight bravely. The attack of Ibn al-Jārūd was so impetuous that at the first attack he crossed at the head of his companions the lines of the Governor. This was followed by a bitter fighting which lasted for an hour. The rebel chief had the better hand so far, when a stray arrow killed him on the battlefield. The rebels were defeated. The fighting ended abruptly.

1. Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, Pp 312-313.
   Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol, II, P. 874.
2. Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, Pp. 312-313.
   Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 874.

Immediately, Al-Ḥajjāj proclaimed safety for all except for Al-Hudhail ibn 'Imrān and 'Abdullāh ibn Ḥakīm. He forbade his soldiers from pursuing the fugitives. The heads of Ibn al-Jārūd and eighteen of his companions were sent to the camp of Al-Muhallab and exposed in the presence of the Khārijites, who had hoped to take up the offensive, in view of the civil war among the enemy camp. The Governor of 'Irāq also made some prisoners, among whom was the poet Al-Ghaḍbān, who was later released by order of the Caliph 'Abdul Malik[1]. The revolt was quelled.

Al-Ḥajjāj's step in announcing the reduction of pay of the militia men, in face of the threat of Khārijites and his severe punishments perpetrated recently, was rather inopportune and untimely. It was nevertheless not thoughtless. The precipitous move, no doubt, almost cost him his life. And it was only because of his patient forbearance and perseverance shown in the course of the revolt that he made good his earlier precipitation. But he had succeeded in breaking the community of the native forces against him and given a heavy blow to the power of the nobles. These feudal lords, he knew, were politically dangerous in as much as they were opposed to any move aimed at consolidation of Umayyad rule in 'Irāq. Al-Ḥajjāj, who considered his personal security as an imperative measure to this far-sighted project, retained the balance of the pay of the soldiers and utilised it later on, we will see, in requisitioning the help of the Syrian forces against the Khārijites, in the first instance and in the long run for consolidating his personal strength against the recalcitrant forces within the country. The revolt of Ibn-Jārūd was in fact a blessing in disguise.

The Revolt of the Zanjs

On his return to Baṣra Al-Ḥajjāj also quelled the revolt of the Zanjs—a wandering tribe coming from East Africa and mainly from the coast of Somaliland. Already at the end of the rule of Muṣ'ab ibn az-Zubair, these foreign bands had settled in small numbers in the valley of the Euphrates around Baṣra. They sowed disorder everywhere and pillaged the orchards. Under the Government of

1. Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, Pp. 312-313; Ṭabarī, 'Tārikh', Vol. II, P. 874.

Khālid ibn 'Abdullāh, immediate successor of Muṣ'ab, the Zanjs became more numerous and terrific. The people complained to the Governor of their molestations. Khālid collected an army to fight them and it was sufficient to disperse them. Those who fell into the hands of the Governor were executed and their bodies were hung on the gallows.

During the revolt of Ibn al-Jārūd, these plunderers were reunited in a great number in the valley of the Euphrates and put at their head a man called Rabāḥ or more often Riyāḥ "whose surname was Shair-Zanj, i.e. "Lion of the Zanjs". They renewed depredation and violence.

After the death of Ibn al-Jārūd, Al-Ḥajjāj ordered the Chief of the police of Baṣra called Ziyād ibn 'Amr, to send an army against "these dogs" so as to clear the plain of their presence. Ziyād gave the command of this expedition to his son Ḥafṣ, who was killed in a fight and whose forces took to flight. Another army entered the campaign under the command of Kurāz ibn Mālik as-Salamī. More fortunate than his predecessor, he dispersed the Zanjs, cut them into pieces and established peace and security in the neighbourhood of Baṣra in 76 A.H. (695 A.D.)[1]. Al-Ḥajjāj had succeeded in warding off their danger and considerably reduced internal opposition against him. He was now more powerful than ever before.

End of the Quarrel with Anas Ibn Mālik

After Al-Ḥajjāj had triumphed over all these enemies, an old man dared to resist him and carried over him the same year a brilliant victory. This old man was Anas ibn Mālik, old servant of the Prophet, and now the honourable citizen of Baṣra, where he had a big family and considerable wealth[2]. He had been branded at the orders of Al-Ḥajjāj, when the latter was Governor of Ḥijāz.

Among the victims who had fallen a prey to the sword ol Al-Ḥajjāj after the mutiny of Rustaqabādh, was 'Abdullāh son of Anas ibn Mālik. Al-Ḥajjāj, thinking this punishment as insufficient and perhaps in view of the earlier animosity, confiscated the property of the father The latter came to the Governor to protest

1. Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Pp. 314-315.
2. Ibn Qutaiba, 'Ma'ārif', P. 134.

against his indiscreet action. "I don't greet you", said Al-Ḥajjāj to him, "I don't wish you welcome, O son of the ignoble mother. O stray old man, versatile in seditions, sometimes partisan of Abū-Turāb ('Alī ibn Abī-Ṭālib), sometimes of Ibn az-Zubair, sometimes of Ibn al-Jārūd. By God! I shall cast off your skin like a stick stripped off its bark. I shall tie you as the thorny bush. I will eradicate you as they extort the gum". "To whom is the Amīr addressing these words"? asked Anas. "To you", replied the Governor. "Then may God perish you"! replied Anas[1].

Another tradition reported by Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi states that during the revolt of Ibn al-Jārūd, Al-Ḥajjāj had ordered Anas to join him in his campaign in order to help him, and that on the refusal of the old man, he had written to him a letter full of abuses and beaten him mercilessly. However, the two traditions are not contradictory. Al-Ḥajjāj in fact wanted to deter this religious scholar from his steady opposition to him and the punishment inflicted on him by the Governor was intended, it seems, to serve as an example to other religious leaders who had made common cause with the nobles and strengthened the hands of his enemy.

In view of Al-Ḥajjāj's attitude, Anas ibn Mālik wrote a letter to the Caliph 'Abdul Malik and complained bitterly of the disrespect shown to him by the Governor of 'Irāq and the maltreatment to which he was subjected. The Caliph, who was greatly incensed wrote two letters, one to Anas and the other to Al-Ḥajjāj. He gave the two letters to a freed slave of Banū Makhzūm. His name was Ismā'īl ibn 'Abdullāh. Ismā'īl received the orders to leave immediately and deliver the letter first to Anas and to express to him how grieviously the inhumanity of the Governor had touched the Prince of Believers and assure him that he would never be subjected to such cruel ordeals in the future.

Ismā'īl accomplished his work very cleverly. When he went to Anas ibn Mālik, he advised him to make a reconciliation with the Governor. The old "Companion" read the letter of the Caliph and touched by the respect shown to him, he promised to follow the advice given by the messenger.

1. Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 313.
Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 865.

Ismā'īl then went to the Governor. The latter welcomed him and said, "I was really longing to see you in this country which I govern". "As for me", replied Ismā'īl, "I would have preferred to see you and come to you in connection with a matter other than the one assigned to me". "What is it"? asked Al-Ḥajjāj. "You have annoyed the Caliph, who is very angry with you". Ismā'īl then gave the letter of the Prince of Believers. Al-Ḥajjāj read it and while he was reading it, his face changed colour and became frightful; a cool sweat trickled down his forehead. "O son of the mother of Al-Ḥajjāj"! wrote the Caliph, "You are a slave whose position is above his merit. You have grown proud in your elevation to the extent of becoming presumptuous. You have crossed the limits of your power. O child of an abject woman[1]! I will cut you to pieces as the lion cuts the fox. I shall stamp you so hardly that you will like to return to your mother's womb. Have you forgotten the condition of your ancestors in the city of Aṭ-Ṭā'if, where they carried stones on their backs, dug wells with their own hands in the valleys where they found springs? Have you forgotten the baseness of your ancestors, their ignominy, their courage and character? The Prince of Believers has been informed of your behaviour full of boldness and audacity towards Anas ibn-Mālik. I think you wanted to sound the Prince of Believers' disposition towards him (Anas ibn Mālik). You must know that he disapproves of such a conduct and that you have become an object of horror for him (Caliph). If he has permitted you to act as you have done, you would be justified; but now he implores the malediction of God on you through the mouth of a servant with feeble sight, staggering feet and lean legs". Then there were definite instructions for the Governor. "Honour this man and the members of his family. Recognise his rights and the services that he rendered to the Apostle of God; don't deprive him of anything he needs. And do not let the Prince of Believers learn that you have transgressed his orders concerning Anas in connection with the veneration and honour due to him because he (Prince of Believers) will send a man to bastinade you, to deprive you of your honour and thus effect the joy of your enemies. Let Anas return to his residence and offer your apology to him, that

1. (One who practised 'Istifrām' with the dried grape-stone of Aṭ-Ṭā'if. In 'Iqd', Vol. III, P. 17.

he may write to the Prince of Believers that he is satisfied with you, if such is the will of God. Greetings"[1].

After reading this letter, as disquieting for his ambition, so humiliating for his pride, the son of Yūsuf dried his forehead (of the sweat) with his right hand. In view of the trouble in which he was, Al-Ḥajjāj wanted to ride immediately and seek apology of Anas. Ismā'īl, *desiring to spare him the public disgrace*, promised to bring to his palace Anas ibn Mālik for reconciliation. And in fact, Anas in spite of his bitter hostility allowed himself to be prevailed upon by the requests of the freed slave and went to the Governor. The latter rose immediately to receive Anas, embraced him and conducted him to his throne, where he made him sit by his side[2]. Anas freely expressed his grievance and complained in particular of how he and his companions were treated as being wicked and hypocrites, when God Himself had honoured them with the title of 'Ansār' because they had defended and affirmed the Faith. In the end, he concluded his grievances by the most touching remarks; "If the jews or the Christians, non-believers as they are, had seen a man who had served Moses or Jesus for a single day, they would certainly have recognised the rights that you have denied me, who served the Apostle of God for ten years"[3]. Al-Ḥajjāj who was deeply moved, begged pardon, made the best honourable amends that he could and finally obtained a letter, addressed to the Prince of Believers to spare him his life and to maintain him in the eminent position he held. In the end, he requested the Caliph to send him assurance in return, to set his fears at rest.

The Caliph in these circumstances, could not be less generous than Anas ibn Mālik, who had pardoned Al-Ḥajjāj. He wrote to his faithful servant a friendly letter, in which he said that his favours and his esteem remained unchanged before the Prince of Believers.

Thus ended this violent quarrel between Anas ibn Mālik and

1. Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 313.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd', Vol. III, P. 17.
2. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd', Vol. III, P. 17.
   Ibn Shākir, 'Uyun', P. 24.
3. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd', Vol. III, Pp. 17-18.
   Ibn al-Athīr, Vol. IV, P. 314.
   Ibn Qutaiba, 'Ma'ārif', P. 134.

Al-Ḥajjāj in 76 A.H. (695 A.D.). The old man regained his estate and lived in Baṣra for another fifteen years, honoured and respected by the Governor[1].

War against the Khārijites

After Al-Ḥajjāj had sent to duty the forces of Kūfa and Baṣra, he instructed Al-Muhallab to speed up his operations against the Azraqites. The war against the Khārijites restarted in 75 A.H. Al-Muhallab defeated the Azraqites at Rāmahurmuz, Sābūr and Jīruft. Al-Ḥajjāj admired the prowess of the general and recognised his services.

The Defeat of the Azraqites

While Al-Ḥajjāj was observing from 'Irāq Al-Muhallab's activities against the Azraqites, he was faced with another danger from the North in 76 A.H. The Shurāt (a branch of the Khārijites) threatened his security and under the command of Shabīb ibn Yazīd made regular incursions on Kūfa. Al-Ḥajjāj put into action more than a dozen generals against Shabīb but they failed to overcome the enemy. At last Al-Ḥajjāj took the command of the operations and defeated Shabīb with the help of the Syrian forces. Defeated and exhausted Shabīb was drowned in the river Dujail in Ahwāz in 77 A.H. The Khārijites were completely annihilated. Al-Ḥajjāj's success was complete.

After Al-Ḥajjāj had sent back to duty the militia of the two big cities of 'Irāq, he expected his two generals Al-Muhallab and 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn-Mikhnaf to speed up operations against the Khārijites, who constituted a permanent menace to 'Irāq. Acquainting with his purpose he wrote to the generals before the defeat of Ibn al-Jārūd, "When you receive my letter, march immediately against the Khārijites"[2]. This note was followed by another, more detailed in which he wrote to Al-Muhallab :

1. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd', Vol. III, P. 18.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 314.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 874-875.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 309.

فإن بشرا رحمه الله إستكره نفسه عليك وأراك غناءه عنك
وأنا أريك حاجتي إليك فأرني الجد في قتال عدوك ومن خفته
على المعصية ممن قبلك فاقتله فإني قاتل من قبلي ومن كان عندي
من ولي من هرب عنك فاعلمني مكانه فإني أرى أن آخذ الولي
بالولي والسمي بالسمي

"Certainly Bishr ibn Marwān felt aversion for you (May God have mercy on him!) and he had affected to show you that he could carry on without your services. But I, on the contrary, show it to you that I need you and in your turn, show me your ardour to fight your enemy. Kill, among the soldiers placed under your command, men whom you believe will revolt ; I will fight those under my Command. Define to me the place in 'Iraq, where the protectors of the deserters of your army are refuged, for I am of the opinion that we should hold responsible friend for a friend and namesake for a namesake":

Al-Muhallab replied to the Governor :

ليس قبلي إلا مطيع وإن الناس إذا أمنوا العقوبة صغروا الذنب
وإذا يئسوا من العفو أكفرهم ذالك فهب لي هؤلاء الذين سميتهم
عصاة فإنهم أبطال أرجو أن يقتل الله بهم العدو

"There are in my service submissive men. When men are secure of punishment, they don't mind committing faults ; when they are disgusted to obtain pardon, they are driven to be infidels. Leave to me these men, whom you have called rebels. They are horsemen full of bravery and by their arms, I hope that God will vanquish the enemy"[1].

These two letters and the subsequent advice given by Al-Ḥajjāj from time to time to Al-Muhallab and the latter's operations against the Azraqites will show how the two men differed in nature from each other : whereas Al-Ḥajjāj was convinced of the superior use of physical force often marked to the point of tyranny; Al-Muhallab mitigated its brute effects by a human touch.

1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 667.

The war against the Khārijites was resumed with vigour in the year 75 A.H. (694 A.D.). After a light resistance, the Azraqites abandoned Rāmahurmuz and encamped in their retreat in Sābūr. Al-Muhallab, chief of the militia of Basra and Ibn-Mikhnaf who commanded the Kūfities reached the enemy in the month of Ramaḍān in the same year. In order to forestall any sudden attack, Al-Muhallab dug a ditch around his camp. As to 'Abdur Rahmān ibn Mikhnaf, he obstinately neglected this elementary measure of prudence; and that in spite of the repeated instances of the commander-in-chief (Al-Muhallab) who was afraid that a nocturnal attack might take place on the Kūfities. However, after a day of combat, during which the troops of Al-Muhallab had the advantage, an Azraqite chief Ṣālih ibn Mikhrāq, attacked at the head of 4,000 men the camp of the sleeping Kūfities at night, defeated them to flight[1].

Informed of this disaster and in view 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn Mikhnaf's cold attitude towards Al-Muhallab, Al-Ḥajjāj wrote to the Governor of Iṣfahān 'Attāb ibn Warqā, to take over the command of the forces of Kūfa, who were fighting the Azraqites. He ordered him at the same time to obey Al-Muhallab every time the needs of the campaign required, maintain the unity of the two armies and always follow his advice. 'Attāb ibn Warqā, although dissatisfied to be put second in command, obeyed the Governor of 'Irāq. He knew that the decisions of Al-Ḥajjāj brooked no appeal. He arrived then in Sābūr, which was already occupied by Al-Muhallab in the month of Jumādā in the year 76 A.H. (August 695 A.D.). The Azraqites still very powerful in Fāris, were absolute masters of Kirmān[2].

At this war raged in a mountainous country without great battles and almost consisted of small daily skirmishes without any great result, Al-Ḥajjāj became impatient at the slow operations of Al-Muhallab. He started sending to Al-Muhallab messenger after messenger blaming him for his delay and ordering him to push his hostilities against the enemies. Al-Ḥajjāj's anxiety for a quick determination of the fight on this front is understandable in view of the new danger with which he was faced at this time.

1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Pp. 668-669.
Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 875-877.
2. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 675.
Ṭabarī, Vol. II, P. 877.

The Shurāt (another branch of the Khārijites) had started their operations on the northern border of Kūfa and were intensifying their activities by making regular incursions on the Capital and threatening its security. Al-Ḥajjāj did not want that the two branches of the Khārijites, the Azraqites and the Shurāt should at any time make common cause against him. He, therefore, desired Al-Muhallab to precipitate his action against the Azraqites in view of this new threat from the North. Al-Ḥajjāj was, therefore, compelled to treat this general with disdain and often threatened him with reproaches and menaces. To these threats Al-Muhallab replied with calm and dignity and continued to fight as it pleased him. Resembling a clever player of chess he liked to chase his enemies gradually till in their last retrenchment they were exposed by an audacious action to an irreparable disaster.

The first messenger despatched towards Al-Muhallab, was Al-Barā' ibn Qabīṣa. He carried a letter in which Al-Ḥajjāj blamed his general for prolonging the war and raising Kharāj from the neighbouring country. He ordered Al-Muhallab to push his hostilities, to avoid excuses, untruths and all the causes of embarrassment, because he was not ready to tolerate them. The general received Al-Barā' and then in order to acquaint him with the nature of fighting in the mountainous country, made him climb a hillock, from where he could see the battle field. He (Al-Barā') saw the bloody fighting and at the end of the day expressed, "By God ! I have never seen warriors like your children nor like your Arab horsemen ; never did I see enemies more tenacious and intrepid than your adversaries". Satisfied with this facet of his activities he had shown to Al-Barā', Al-Muhallab further obliged the messenger with presents by giving him a sum of 10,000 dirhems. When Al-Barā' went back to the Governor, he narrated what he had seen of the fight and exonerated the commander-in-chief Al-Muhallab. Al Barā' carried a letter from Al-Muhallab who protested against the charges of which he was the object, "If I had abstained from uprooting the Azraqites and chasing them from their positions, I would have deceived the Musalmāns, and failed in my obligations to the Prince of Believers and showed disloyalty to the Amīr (May God protect him !) May God protect me of a design so criminal ! May He protect me from serving him in this way ! Greetings"[1].

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1004-1006.
Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Pp. 671-672.

Al-Ḥajjāj who was not satisfied with the report of the first messenger, sent another messenger Al-Jarrāḥ ibn 'Abdullāh immediately to the camp of Al-Muhallab on a similar mission; "You collect the 'Kharāj'", wrote Al-Ḥajjāj to the general, "on the pretext of meeting the needs of the army. You put yourself under cover in the retrenched camp and you delay the action with the enemy, although your armies are more powerful and your forces more numerous. It is not, I think, revolt or cowardice on your part but you seek to save your life and you find it more comfortable to leave your enemies to subsist rather than fight them. Attack them soon, or you disobey. Greetings". At the arrival of the messenger Al-Muhallab again fought the Khārijites, morning and evening for three days[1]. Al-Jarrāḥ ibn 'Abdullāh submitted a favourable report to Al-Ḥajjāj and Al-Muhallab addressed the following note to the Governor of 'Irāq: "I have received the letter in which you blame me of delaying incessantly encounter with the enemy. You don't believe (as you say) that there is any revolt or cowardice on my part and nevertheless, you reproach me as if I were a coward, you threaten me as if I were a rebel. Ask, therefore, Al-Jarrāḥ. Greetings"[2].

But Al-Ḥajjāj did not yield and he sent two messengers instead of one ordering the general to press his hostilities. One of the two messengers Ziyād ibn 'Abdur Rahmān who accompanied Ḥabīb, the son of Al-Muhallab to the battle-field was fatally wounded. The other a Thaqīfite returned to Al-Ḥajjāj full of admiration for the courage and prowess of Al-Muhallab and his sons[3]. Al-Ḥajjāj, it appears, was convinced of the tenacity of war and Al-Muhallab's operations against the enemy and did not, therefore, send any other messenger. He, however. hastened to strengthen Al-Muhallab's hands.

'Attāb ibn Warqā, colleague of Al-Muhallab for the last eight months had not resigned himself to play a second fiddle to the general: he rarely consulted his superior. The Governor of 'Irāq recalled 'Attāb ibn Warqā and sent him to fight the Shurāt on the other front. Henceforth the command of all the army of Fāris was devolved on Al-Muhallab, who appointed his son Ḥabīb at the

1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 674
2. Mubarrad, 'Kamil', Ibid.
3. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 676.

head of the militia of Kūfa[1]. This was the second time that Al-Ḥajjāj had recalled insubordinate generals from service, who had failed to serve Al-Muhallab to the latter's satisfaction. Al-Ḥajjāj, thereby, reasserted confidence in Al-Muhallab's command.

In the year 77 A.H. (696 A.D.) the Azraqites, commanded by Qaṭarī ibn al-Fujā'a, were completely repulsed in Kirmān. Al-Muhallab pursued them and occupied As-Sīrjān, capital of this province and at last laid siege to the important city of Jīruft, the last stronghold of their resistance[2].

After many tenacious fightings, Al-Muhallab had the satisfaction to see factions break out among the ranks of the enemy. Three fourths of Qaṭarī's followers deserted him and instead, invested the supreme authority in 'Abd Rabb al-Kabīr one of them[3].

Witness to a rupture so desired, Al-Muhallab hastended to inform Al-Ḥajjāj. The Governor, on learning of the news wrote the following note back to the General, "I have received" wrote he, "the letter in which you apprise me of the dissensions which divide the Khārijites. When this message reaches you, seize the opportunity and attack them before they re-unite and resist you with more formidable power. Greetings". "I don't find it opportune to fight", replied Al-Muhallab, "as long as they do not kill themselves and exterminate each other with their own hands. If they destroy themselves thus, this is what we want and this is their ruin ; if on the contrary, they reunite later, it will only be after they have weakened each other. Then, I shall attack them because they will be easier to be defeated and less formidable for us than before, if such be the will of God. Greetings"[4].

The subsequent events justified the course of action suggested by Al-Muhallab. The followers of Qaṭarī, despaired of entering Jīruft, left in the direction of North towards Ṭabaristān[5]. Qaṭarī later fell into the hands of Al-Ḥajjāj[6].

The Azraqites of 'Abd Rabb al-Kabīr, on the other hand, held out long against Al-Muhallab. Al-Ḥajjāj sent another messenger 'Ubaid ibn Abī-Rabī'a blaming Al-Muhallab for delay and

1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Pp. 676-677.
2. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Pp. 683-684.
3. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1006.
4. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1007.
5. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', P. 1007.
6. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1021.

temporisations. This time the general contended himself by replying, "I have spared no effort"[1].

In the course of action between Al-Muhallab and 'Abd Rabb al-Kabīr, the wildness of the fighters obliterated the previous fury of the battles. 'Abd Rabb was killed. Al-Muhallab occupied Jīruft.

From this town, he sent immediately two messengers to Al-Ḥajjāj to inform him[1] of the death of 'Abd Rabb al-Kabīr and the annihilation of his party. These messengers were the poets Ka'b ibn Ma'dān al-Ashqarī and a certain Murra ibn Talīd. Both of them belonged to the tribe of Azd to which Al-Muhallab belonged himself.

"Are you a poet or an orator"? asked Al-Ḥajjāj of the first. "Both", *replied the messenger and* he recited to the Governor of 'Irāq a long 'qaṣida' in which he celebrated the heroic days of Rāmahurmuz, Sābūr and Jīruft. Al-Ḥajjāj then asked, "Give me news about the sons of Al-Muhallab"? "Al-Mughīrah is their chief horseman and their lord; Yazīd is a fearless warrior, and that suffices his glory; Qabīṣa is the best and the most generous among them, a brave man who does not blush to take the flight before Mudrik; 'Abdul Malik is poison mixed in water; Ḥabīb is sudden death in person; Muḥammed is the lion of the forest and the audacity of Al-Mufaḍḍal has something to please you". Satisfied with the description of Al-Muhallab's sons, Al-Ḥajjāj said, "and in what condition did you leave the troops"? "I left them in a good condition, having attained what they desired and safe against what they feared". "How did the sons of Al-Muhallab behave in your midst"? "During the day they were the protectors of the flocks who grazed in liberty; during the night, they were horsemen who conducted surprise attacks". "Who is the bravest amongst them"? "They resemble a ring fixed in a mould and the extremity of which one cannot distinguish". "What were your proceedings towards the enemy"? "We used to pardon the prisoners, when we captured them; but if the enemy resisted, we were helpless for their security. We used to take the offensive in the battles. The final success is for them who fear God". "But, how did Qaṭarī escape you"? asked Al-Ḥajjāj. "We used the same strategems against him and we drove him to take the part we desired".

1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Pp. 687-688.

"Why did you not pursue him then"? "Because we preferred not to cross the frontier of the country assigned to us and then follow an army in the rout". "How did Al-Muhallab treat you and what were your dispositions towards him"? "He cared for us like a father and we had for him a filial love". "Were the soldiers satisfied"? "They enjoyed everywhere security and were surrounded by booty". "Did you prepare these answers"? "God who is Invisible alone knows"[1].

Al-Ḥajjāj, who was satisfied with the response to his detailed inquiry, thereafter, wrote to Al-Muhallab, prescribing him to leave in Kirmān a lieutenant of his choice and to come to 'Irāq without delay. Al-Muhallab gave the Government of Kirmān to his son Yazīd and then left for Baṣra, where Al-Ḥajjāj met him. It was in the year 78 A.H.

Al-Ḥajjāj, who showed himself so tenacious and often unrelenting towards Al-Muhallab during the war against the Khārijites, admired the prowess of the general after the victory. He received with great honour, affection and recognition, the vanquisher of the Azraqites. In a solemn assembly, he seated him by his side on the throne, saying to the people and the soldiers, "Inhabitants of 'Irāq ! you are the slaves of Al-Muhallab"[2]. The latter assured Al-Ḥajjāj that he had wanted to conduct the hostilities more rapidly but that he could not resolve on this, because the best course was not that of precipitation. Al-Ḥajjāj, withholding his joy with difficulty, approved all, pardoned all. He requested the general to mention to him the warriors who had distinguished themselves by their beautiful exploits of arms. Al-Muhallab named them in order of merit, by starting with his eight children. "If anyone else", said he "had got over my sons in valour, I would have given him the preference but without any fear that I am committing any injustice against him, I put him in the last rank". "Your preferences are justifiable", replied Al-Ḥajjāj. "You know their merits better because you were with these valiant men and I was far from them. They are assuredly amongst the defenders of the Faith". After his children, Al-Muhallab mentioned his grandsons Ma'n ibn al-Mughīrah, then the intrepid Ar-Ruqād and all the most

1. Mubarrad, 'Kamil', Pp. 690-695.
   'Aghānī', Vol. XIII, Pp. 56-58.
2. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Pp. 695-699.
   Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1033.

deserving warriors. Al-Ḥajjāj increased the pay of each of these brave men by 2,000 dirhems and in order to complete the exciting emulation in the ranks of the victorious army, he classified in order of merit the tribes that formed it[1]. And like a true admirer of courage and chivalry, Al-Ḥajjāj paid the honour where it was due.

The Defeat of the Shurāt

The Governor of 'Irāq was inordinately busy during the years 76 A.H. and 77 A.H. While he was watching from Kūfa the movements of Al-Muhallab who was fighting the Khārijites, he had to fight another sect still more frightful. It was called the Shurāt. The war against the Shurāt was long and difficult.

Ṣāliḥ ibn Musarriḥ, the Tamīmite, who shared the heterodox opinions of Ṣufriyya[2], was the first to take up arms at the head of this sect[3]. He and his devoted followers Shabīb ibn Yazīd, Suwaid ibn Sulaim al-Hindī and al-Baṭīn had plotted to assassinate Caliph 'Abdul Malik at the time of the Ḥajj in 75 A.H. (694 A.D.). But the conspiracy was unearthed and the plotters fled to 'Irāq where Al-Ḥajjāj had just arrived. The Caliph then wrote to his servant to arrest them. The search for them remained without result. Ṣāliḥ left Kūfa and went further to the north[4].

Arriving in Dārā in Mesopotamia and joined by Shabīb, the two Khārijites raised the standard of revolt in the month of Ṣafar in the year 76 A.H. (695 A.D.). Ṣāliḥ received the title of the Prince of the Believers[5].

Enlivened by their initial success in Mesopotamia against the Governor Muḥammed ibn Marwān, the brother of the Caliph, Ṣāliḥ and Shabīb arrived in the territory of Daskara ready to alight on the plains of 'Irāq.

Al-Ḥajjāj, informed of their approach, sent against them the first army consisting of 3,000 Kūfites under the command of Al-Ḥāri<u>th</u> ibn 'Umaira. They advanced in the direction of Daskara while Ṣāliḥ reached Al-Mudabbaj, a village situated on the border of the province of Mauṣil and the vast territory called Jūkhā.

1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Pp. 695-699.
   Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1033.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 880.
3. Ibn al-A<u>th</u>īr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 317.
4. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 881.
5. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 885-886.

Ṣāliḥ met his peer with a contingent of 90 men. Ḥārith commanding the centre of his army charged speedily. Ṣāliḥ was killed. Shabīb escaped to a castle in the neighbourhood where his followers took the oath of loyalty to him and promised to raise him to the dignity of the Prince of the Believers[1].

In the evening of the same day Al-Ḥārith laid siege and set fire to the gate of the castle. Seeing their death, if they waited for the day, Shabīb and his men soaked their blankets in water, threw them on the burning coals and jumped over them and attacked the enemy. The sleeping soldiers of Al-Ḥārith awoke frightened and soon took to flight. They did not stop until they reached Madā'in. Shabīb occupied their camp on the 13th of Jumādā 76 A.H. Ṣāliḥ was avenged. This success encouraged the party of the rebels and they increased in strength every day. Shabīb latter drove to the frontiers of the province of Mauṣil, made a tour in the mountains of Adharbaijān in the north-east and then left this area immediately to return to the territory of Daskara[2].

Discouraged by this initial defeat of a general who failed to foresee the manoeuvres of a clever enemy, Al-Ḥajjāj sent Sufyān ibn Abi'l 'Āliya who was fighting the Prince of Ṭabaristān. He ordered this general to establish his camp at Daskara and instructed him to commence his hostilities only after the arrival of the defeated troops now at Madā'in. At the same time, he ordered the army of Al-Ḥārith to join Sufyān at Daskara. Saura ibn Abjar, the Tamīmite, who was commanding a contingent of 500 soldiers of Banū Manādhir, was also instructed to join Sufyān. Impatient to fight his enemy alone, Sufyān advanced before the arrival of Saura, or the soldiers from Madā'in and reached the foot of the mountains of Khāniqīn. His soldiers were chased in an ambush and they took to flight in this panic. Sufyān, however, continued the fight and in the bitter combat lost his horse and fell on the ground badly wounded. One of his servants Ghuzwān gave him his own horse and while standing for his master as a rampart, made way for him to escape and save his life. Ghuzwān was killed. Sufyān defeated, took refuge at Bābil Mahrūdh, from where he wrote a letter to Al-Ḥajjāj giving an account of his heroic fight. On reading this letter, Al-Ḥajjāj shouted, "Whosoever acts likewise and fights

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 892.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kamil', Vol IV, Pp. 320-321.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 893.

as a hero like Sufyān is worthy of praise". And he wrote to him these few words, "You have given a great proof of your valour. You have done your duty. Return to your people when your sufferings are lighter. You will be compensated. Greetings"[1].

While Al-Ḥajjāj encouraged a defeated hero, he never spared one who shirked in his duty. In anger he reprimanded Saura ibn Abjar, "O son of the mother of Saura! It did not behove you to transgress my orders and remain behind far from my army". And then ordered him to fight Shabīb. The instructions to the general from the Amīr enclosed the following advice on the art of conducting war. "Show firmity in your command and set a snare on your enemies because the superior art of war lies in the well-combined strategems". Saura advanced to meet Shabīb who was encamped on the eastern bank of river Nahrawān. Saura left his camp one night and at the head of 300 men made a surprise attack on the enemy. But the Shurāt were well guarded and repulsed the move of Saura. The army of 'Irāq retreated to Madā'in. Shabīb withdrew, crossed Jūkhā and then went in the direction of Takrīt. Al-Ḥajjāj put Saura in prison for not using the strategems addressed in his letters to him (Saura) and instead making a night attack. Saura was, however, set at liberty later on[2].

After this shameful retreat, the Governor of 'Irāq called Al-Jazl whose real name was 'Uthmān ibn Sa'īd and said to him: "Make your preparations to go and fight these unbelievers and when you arrive before them, do not approach them with the precipitation of a coward. Don't behave with the frightening timidity of a coward. Do you understand"? "Yes, I have understood (God protect the Amīr!)", replied Al-Jazl. "In this case go and establish your camp at Dair 'Abdur Raḥmān and wait for the arrival of the troops". "I implore the Amīr (God protect him!)", said Al-Jazl, "not to send with me soldiers of the army which was dispersed and put to the rout, because these soldiers are struck with terror and I am afraid none of them will be useful either to your cause or to that of Musalmāns". "Your request is granted", replied the Governor, "because your opinion appeals to me excellently and is inspired by God Himself". Al-Jazl was put at the command of 4.000 men. He led them to Madā'in and then to

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 896-898.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol II, Pp. 901-902.

Jūkhā in pursuit of Shabīb. He finally established his camp at Dair-Yazdajird.

Shabīb who was rich in expedients resolved to weaken the patience of the enemy by his marches and counter-marches. Al-Jazl's resistance and vigilance on the other hand compelled Shabīb to retire to Jūkhā a number of times. Al-Ḥajjāj soon found his treasury empty by these slow processes of war and blamed Al-Jazl for avoiding hasty action against the enemy. He sent Sa'īd ibn al-Mujālid to precipitate action against Shabīb. Sa'īd arrived on the banks of Nahrawān, with orders "to attack the enemy immediately, to be firm in its presence, to implore against it the help of God, to avoid discussion and the temporising imitations of Al-Jazl's tactics"[1].

The new general who commanded the cavalry of Kūfa faired no better. Shabīb, who had enclosed himself in the fortress of Qaṭīṭiya, fell on the troops of Sa'īd. The latter took to flight at the first shock and deserted Sa'īd who died a heroic death. Shabīb then attacked the infantry of Al-Jazl who was equally left alone to fight the enemy. Al-Jazl, covered with wounds, was taken to Madā'in.

From this town he wrote to Al-Ḥajjāj about his sad plight and related to him his defeat. The Governor wrote in reply: "I am satisfied with the precipitation of Sa'īd as well as with your slowness; as to his precipitation it has made him enter paradise; as to your slowness, it has not prevented you from taking advantage of good opportunities. Leaving circumstances when they are not favourable is also acting with firmness. You have fought heroically and deserve a reward. In my eyes you are one of those who should be listened to, should be obeyed and whose advice may be sought. I am sending you Ḥayyān ibn Abjar to look after you and dress your wounds and I am sending you 2000 dirhems. Use this sum for your personal needs and assuage the sufferings you have endured"[2]. A deed of heroism, however, small in magnitude, could move the Governor to munificence.

The audacity of Shabīb grew. He crossed the Tigris near the city of Baghdād and took the direction of Kūfa. The inhabitants of this city were alarmed. Al-Ḥajjāj calm in tense moments

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 905-907.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 913-914.

sent Suwaid ibn 'Abdur Raḥmān to encounter the Shurāt at the head of 2,000 chosen men. One evening Shabīb crossed the Euphrates and attacked them in the neighbourhood of the Capital; but this time the 'Irāqian forces remained impenetrable notwithstanding the fear; and Shabīb had to withdraw without obtaining any substantial advantage. Al-Ḥajjāj ordered Suwaid to pursue the enemy. The Khārijites rode up the course of the Euphrates, passed by Al-Ḥaṣṣāṣa and Al-Anbār, Daqūqā and occupied the neighbouring region of Ad͟harbaijān. Then only Al-Ḥajjāj ordered Suwaid to cease pursuing them.

The attack on Kūfa had been repulsed. The people heaved a sigh of relief. Al-Ḥajjāj, however, decided to go to Baṣra to see things for himself there and bring help against the enemy. He left in Kūfa as his lieutenant 'Urwah ibn al-Mughīrah ibn Shu'ba, the T͟haqīfite, whose father was the first husband of Al-Ḥajjāj's mother.

Soon 'Urwah ibn al-Mughīrah received a despatch from a 'dihqān' of Bābil Mahrūd͟h announcing that Shabīb had made a plan to enter Kūfa and that he was at the moment in Khānījār. A messenger carried the news to Baṣra where Al-Ḥajjāj had just arrived. The Governor very uneasy, immediately mounted his horse and took the road to Kūfa. He entered Kūfa at midday while Shabīb could only encamp at the gates of the city at sunset. The Shurāt, after offering the prayers and taking their meals, jumped on their horses and at the fall of the night entered the streets of the city, which was not fortified at that time[1].

In his campaigns, Shabīb took with him his mother Jahīzah and his wife Ghazāla[2]. The latter, says Mas'ūdī, had acquired a great fame for her valour and her cleverness in handling a horse; such was also the mother of Shabīb[3]. When Shabīb entered the city, Al-Ḥajjāj did not offer any resistance to him. The inhabitants of Kūfa equally remained passive and remained indoors. Aghānī reports that Al-Ḥajjāj took to flight before Ghazāla, the Ḥarūrite[4]. This statement of Aghānī that Al-Ḥajjāj took to flight before Ghazāla is not equally ascertained by other historians. We can, therefore, more accurately presume that since the town was not

1. Tabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 916-917.
2. Ibn Khallikān, 'Wafayāt', Vol. I, P. 315.
3. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, P. 146.
4. 'Aghānī', Vol. XVI, P. 155.

fortified at the time, Al-Ḥajjāj preferred to withdraw to his castle and in the period that he had between his arrival (noon) and his rival's (sunset) he busied himself in fortifying the castle. When the Khārijites approached the castle, their leader struck the gate with his massive arms and hurled insults at Al-Ḥajjāj. They then directed themselves towards the great mosque where they massacred several believers who were offering their prayers[1]. Ghazāla had taken a vow, says Mas'ūdī, to offer her prayers at Kūfa. Accompanied by 70 Khārijites, she *entered the mosque, recited with them* the morning prayer and fulfilled her vow[2].

The band of Shurāt continued their nocturnal brigandage and it was only after their departure that the Governor ordered his herald to make an appeal to the arms. 'Uthmān ibn Qaṭan with his freed men and his soldiers responded first to the appeal. Later the troops came from all sides to spend the rest of the night beside the castle. The next morning, Al-Ḥajjāj sent against the Khārijites *an army of 6,000 men, divided in four columns each* having at its head an Amīr. Muḥammed ibn Mūsā ibn Ṭalḥa who had been appointed Governor of Sijistān equally accepted the request of Al-Ḥajjāj to offer his services against Shabīb. Muḥammed ibn Mūsā was the fifth Amīr[3].

The Amīrs now five in number, reunited their troops not far from Baṣra in the lower valley of the Euphrates where the Shurāt pursued their erring business. But Shabīb, suddenly changing the direction, went again towards *the* north-west *on the side* of Al-Qādisiyya. Al-Ḥajjāj recruited from Kūfa another contingent of 1,800 horsemen under the command of Zahr ibn Qais and sent them to pursue the rebels. Shabīb defeated the troops of Kūfa and left the general for dead. The freshness of the morning awoke the latter, who had strength to drag himself to a neighbouring village, from where he was carried to Kūfa. When with his head wrapped in cotton, he appeared, some days later, before Al-Ḥajjāj. The Governor welcomed him with great respect and made him sit by his side on his throne and said to the men who were there :

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 918.
2. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, P. 147.
   Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 903.
   Ibn al-Khallikān, 'Wafayāt', Vol. I, P . 315.
3. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 918-920.

من سره أن ينظر إلى رجل من اهل الجنة يمشي بين الناس وهو
شهيد فلينظر إلى زحر بن قيس

"Let those, who desire to have the satisfaction to see one of the inhabitants of Heaven and a martyr walking among men, have a look of Zahr ibn Qais"[1]. Thus Al-Ḥajjāj did not miss any occasion to exalt courage, even though unfortunate.

Encouraged by his success against Zahr ibn Qais, Shabīb returned to fight the Amirs near Rūdhbār, about 24 'farasakhs' to the south of Kūfa. Al-Ḥajjāj gave the command of the forces to Zā'idah ibn Qudāma, one of the Amīrs. Qudāma was killed in the fighting and in the pell-mell of the flight, the Governor of Sijistān, Muḥammed ibn Mūsā was also killed by Shabīb. The unfortunate Governor never returned to see the beautiful province of Sijistān[2].

The Shurāt wanted to march immediately to Kūfa but seeing that he had lost many men, Shabīb preferred to leave this city. He resumed his adventurous course towards the north.

Knowing that Shabīb would return very soon, Al-Ḥajjāj prepared for the defence of Madā'in which commanded the city and territory of Kūfa. He confided the defence of Madā'in to the Governor, 'Uthmān ibn Qaṭan and sent an army of 6,000 men under the command of the famous 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn Muḥammed ibn al-Ash'ath to the terrible enemy. But 'Abdur Raḥmān had in his heart the incorrigible weakness of the inhabitants of 'Irāq. Al-Ḥajjāj soon replaced him. He sent Al-Muṭarrif ibn al-Mughīrah ibn Shu'ba, brother of 'Urwah ibn al-Mughīrah, to take charge of Madā'in as Governor and ordered 'Uthmān ibn Qaṭan to take up command against Shabīb[3]. 'Uthmān fought like a hero against the fury of the united Shurāt but fell fighting. As always the remnants of the defeated army fled to Kūfa 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn al-Ash'ath, suspected of having secret relations, almost amicable, with Shabīb, lay hiding in the city until the Governor offered him security.

It was with this sad defeat that Al-Ḥajjāj saw the year

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 921-922.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 926-927.
3. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 930-933.

76 A.H. (695-696 A.D.) completed. But he was not despaired. He appealed to the people of Kūfa to fight for the defence of their cities and properties and they shared his feelings and replied, "We will fight our enemies". Al-Ḥajjāj mobilised a mammoth army of 50,000 Kūfites and gave the command to 'Attāb ibn Warqā who was recalled because of his discontent with Al-Muhallab. 'Attāb ibn Warqā was the fifteenth Amīr sent against the Shurāt by the Governor of 'Irāq.

In the meantime, Al-Ḥajjāj alive to the consequences of defeat always possible, and the unreliability of the Kūfites, wrote to Caliph 'Abdul Malik, "I announce to the Prince of the Believers (May God bestow on him His graces !) that Shabīb is on the point of attacking Madā'in and that he has the intention of attacking Kūfa later. The inhabitants of this town have been powerless to resist him in a great number of encounters ; he has always killed *the Amīrs and put the soldiers to rout. Therefore,* I request the Prince of the Believers to raise, if he considers it proper, an army from among the Syrians to come and fight the enemies of the inhabitants of 'Irāq and devastators of their country. Greetings".

The Caliph sent the excellent general Sufyān ibn al-Abrad the Kalbite, with an army of 4,000 men and Ḥabīb ibn 'Abdur Raḥmān, with 2,000 soldiers, in all 6,000 soldiers[1].

'Attāb ibn Warqā, appointed to the command of 50,000 men, had in his contingent, Quraishites and other Arab nobles, old warriors and young recruits. Before their departure Al-Ḥajjāj mounted the pulpit in the mosque and said to them, "O inhabitants of 'Irāq ! put yourself in the fight, under the command of 'Attāb ibn Warqā. I do not allow any man, if he is not in the administration, the permission to remain here. Don't you know that the brave soldiers obtain consideration and glory in holy war, while the cowards only reap disdain and oppression ? I swear by Him, Who is the Only God that if you behave like your predecessors in this theatre of war, I shall put you under a stern control ; I shall press you with all my power and stifle you[2].

In the meantime, Shabīb had crossed the Tigris at Kalwādhā and occupied the town of Bahurasīr, not far from Madā'in. Al-Muṭarrif ibn al-Mughīrah proposed to him a conference to be devoted

1. Tabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 942-943.
   Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh-Dhahab', Vol. III, P. 147.
2. Tabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 948.

to clarify certain passages of the Qur'ān. The chief of the Shurāt accepted. Each of the two parties took hostages and sent delegates. The discussion lasted for days, but they did not agree on any of the points under dispute and Al-Muṭarrif, the Governor of Madā'in, fearing vengeance of Al-Ḥajjāj, for having conducted negotiations with Shabīb, ran away to the mountains of Medie, where he revolted in his turn[1]. The terror of Al-Ḥajjāj drove men to rebellion if they were convinced that they had offended him.

The moment Shabīb saw that an alliance with Al-Muṭarrif was impossible, he formed the project of attacking the Syrian army that the Caliph 'Abdul Malik had sent to the help of Kūfa. But Al-Ḥajjāj, advised by one of his favourites, Qabīṣa ibn Wāliq, the Taghlibite, had already ordered the Syrians to abandon at Hīt the route of the Euphrates and Al-Anbār and from there come directly to the Capital by way of 'Ain at-Tamr. These troops advanced rapidly. The Shurāt who were now a thousand men turned towards the Kūfites encamped at Sūq Ḥakama, a number of 50,000. Shabīb opposed the enemy with 600 men and put the vast enemy forces to rout. 'Attāb ibn Warqā fought with perseverance but found the soldiers of Kūfa as unreliable as on earlier occasions. He was killed. The rest of the Kūfites took the oath of loyalty to Shabīb while the others fled to Kūfa. The triumphant Shabīb took the route to Kūfa, where very fortunately for the Governor, the Syrian troops sent by the Caliph, had just arrived[2].

Al-Ḥajjāj, who had threatened the deserters with vengeance, excused them with disdain. Ascending the pulpit, he said to them: "O inhabitants of Kūfa! May God no more give power to those, who sought it with your help! Get out of the city, go away from us. I don't want you to take part in the combats that we are going to fight with our enemies. Go to Ḥīra and remain there in the midst of the Jews and the Christians. You are forbidden to fight on our sides; there is only exception for my administrators and for the men who did not take part in the last battle with 'Attāb ibn Warqā"[3].

The enemy, who was rapidly advancing on to the gates of Kūfa, had crossed the Euphrates and on the following day of the victory

1. Tabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 946-947.
2. Tabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 953-954.
3. Tabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 954-955.

pitched its tents on the extremity of Sabakha, i.e. on the plain to the east of Kūfa. Shabīb built an improvised mosque there and made preparation for the final assault. Al-Ḥajjāj posted his servants and his freed slaves at the entry of the streets of Kūfa.

Al-Ḥajjāj had not so far quitted the town of Kūfa to take up the fight himself. A number of reasons compelled him to do so. The inhabitants of this recalcitrant province were likely to be swept by any revolt. Their unreliable dispositions never gained the confidence of the Governor, who did not deam it scrupulous to endanger his person in a general fight with the enemy. Under the circumstances he felt compelled to take the support of the Syrian soldiers and only launched a fight with the enemy, when he had them under his command. 'Abdul Malik had responded to his request for them and he could lead them now, if he so desired. Holding the Capital under his firm hand, he sent general after general to oppose Shabīb but saw them heroically defeated before the firebrand and the soldiers of 'Irāq returned to the Capital in shame. He attended to the day-to-day administration of the provinces, received and sent messages to the Caliph, advised Al-Muhallab and the commanders and generals whom he sent to fight the Khārijites. In view of these circumstances Al-Ḥajjāj did not leave Kūfa. However, urged by the future conqueror of Transoxiana, Qutaiba ibn Muslim, who chid him for failing in all his duties by abstaining to meet Shabīb himself, the Governor of 'Irāq came out of his castle and ordered that a mule be brought to him to take him to Sabakha. His servants brought to him a mule with white feet, and as some people remarked to the Governor that the Persians in his army drew a bad omen from this chestnut mule if he mounted it on a day as that. "Let it be brought to me", replied Al-Ḥajjāj, "as the present day will be brilliant and beautiful like the feet of this animal"[1]. And having mounted it, Al-Ḥajjāj, followed by his Syrians, took the 'way of the post' and soon appeared before Shabīb, on the culminating point of Sabakha. The same moment the son of Yūsuf alighted, and the Khārijites came to offer him the battle, at the head of 600 horsemen.

Al-Ḥajjāj addressed his soldiers and said, "O Syrians! You are the men who know how to hear and obey; you are the men of constancy and firm faith. Let not the error of these weakmen

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 958.

triumph over the truth you possess. Bend the knees and with eyes fixed to the ground, welcome the enemy on the points of your lances". The Syrians bent their knees as they were told and the lances suspended, "similar to a land full of black stones", they waited immobile[1].

The small army of Shabīb was divided into three divisions commanded by him, by Suwaid and by Al-Muḥallil ibn Wā'il. "Charge with your horsemen", said first the chief Khārijite to Suwaid. The latter attacked the Syrian infantry, always immobile on its knees. But when it came to the point of lances, this infantry stood erect in a single leap face to face with the horses, striking with redoubled effort right before them, neither letting themselves penetrate nor reach. Suwaid had to retire. Al-Ḥajjāj, who was seated at a certain distance behind the lines of his soldiers shouted in order to encourage them, "It is good. Men who know how to hear and obey. Continue like this. Riding master, advance the seat", and satisfied with the happy beginning, he came near the Syrians to support them with his immediate presence.

Al-Muḥallil, by order of Shabīb, attacked in his turn the Syrians but met the same fate. "It is good, O Men who know how to hear and obey", said Al-Ḥajjāj restored, "Continue like this. Riding master, advance my seat"[2].

At last, Shabīb threw himself "on this earth full of black stones". He fought long and also useless. He had met an equal. Desperate to cut the Syrian lines, Shabīb said to Suwaid, "Conduct your cavalry against the defenders of this street. Perhaps you will be able to disperse them and reach Al-Ḥajjāj in the rear, while we attack him in the face". Suwaid tried to carry out this turning movement but the missiles were raining from the house tops and moreover, as an extra defence for himself, Al-Ḥajjāj had guarded against any surprise attack by leaving behind him a contingent of 300 Syrians, commanded by 'Urwah ibn al-Mughīrah ibn Shu'ba. Suwaid was compelled to withdraw a second time. "O people of Islām"! shouted Shabīb witnessing this new failure, "we have bought nothing other than God Himself and whoever makes this purchase will neither find the damages exorbitant nor the sufferings which come in His service. Be constant. Retake

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 958-959.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 959.
Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 344.

the energy that you showed in the heroic battles". Then he gathered all his companions for a general attack. Al-Ḥajjāj, on his part, said to his men : "Men who know how to hear and obey, bear with firmity this furious attack and I swear by the Master of the sky that nothing will separate us from victory". They had arrived at the mosque that Shabīb had improvised. Al-Ḥajjāj went to the roof with a score of archers to whom he said, "When the enemy approaches, pierce them with your arrows". And from the height of this turret, he continued to direct the action till the end of the day[1].

Amidst such attempts the two armies fought. One was fighting for a lost game and the other desperate for retaining the standard of victory so far held. But inspite of desperate efforts the state of Shabīb paled. Nevertheless, he refused to admit defeat. Suddenly cries of victory, "Allah Akbar", resounded in the plain and on the tops of the houses of Kūfa. The flames of a fire were added to the immense clamour. Shabīb turned out to look himself. He found red flames illuminating sinisterly the night, coming from the camp. It was the work of Khālid ibn 'Attab ibn Warqā, *who with the permission of Al-Ḥajjāj and with the help of a band* of Kūfites, had repulsed the Khārijite army and occupied suddenly the tents almost deserted by Shabīb. Muṣād his brother, Ghazāla his wife and Jahīzah his mother were the victims of this unexpected attack[2].

The chief of the Shurāt and his companions, defeated, ruined and exhausted, jumped on to their horses and for the first time took to flight. The cavalry of Al-Ḥajjāj pursued them. Shabīb remained the last to protect the retreat of his men, dismounting from time to time, prostrating low and beating the ground as a sign of his distress and prayer. During this period, Al-Ḥajjāj returned to Kūfa. His success was splendid.

Far from the place of his defeat Shabīb recovered his strength and returned to fight more than once. But the odds against him were heavy and the men who were loyal to him so far started breaking away. He made his last appearance in Jūkhā, then returned towards Ahwāz, penetrated into Fāris, then in the

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 960.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 345.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 960-961 and 965.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 345.

mountains of Kirmān to take rest. During one of these marches covered by him at this time and seeing his companions very sad, Shabīb said to them, like a man who sees his own shadow of life cross him, "Let it be hard, if we did seek this world, but it is light in the presence of the reward that God reserves for us". "You are right, the Prince of the Believers", replied the Shurāt, as they took courage.

In view of the reappearance of Shabīb, the Governor of 'Irāq, did not neglect any measure to win the confidence and affection of his soldiers. He forgot the ignoble behaviour of so many cowards, distributed significant amounts to the brave and the wounded. He could be as great in his magnanimity as he was wicked in his cruelty. And when the rebels made a last bid and took the road for 'Irāq, he sent against them the excellent Syrian General, Sufyān ibn al-Abrad, at the head of an army. This was the last battle.

It was on the right bank of the Dujail in the Ahwāz that the supreme encounter took place and it was Shabīb who crossed the river to begin the attack. During the long hours of the action, the Khārijites led more than thirty attacks against the Syrians but failed to penetrate. The battle continued till the evening and Shabīb's men withdrew for the night. At the entrance of the bridge Shabīb remained at the end to protect the retreat of his soldiers. "Cross the stream", said he, "Tomorrow at dawn we will attack them again, if such is the will of God". With his partisans and without alighting from his horse, Shabīb advanced on the bridge of boats. But he had before him a haughty mare. While jumping on her, the horse put a foot on the edge of the bridge, slipped and fell into the river with its rider. The latter was wearing a heavy iron helmet. "May God accomplish the task decreed by Him"! said he while falling. One of his companions shouted to him, "Prince of the Believers, will you perish drowned"? Shabīb came again to the surface and said, "Such is the will of the Most Powerful, the Most Wise". And he was drowned in 77 A.H. (686 A.D.). If we must believe a tradition reported in Tabarī[1], the body of Shabīb was recovered from the water and sent to the Governor of 'Irāq. Al-Hajjāj opened his chest to take

1. Tabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 976.
Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 350.

out the heart. According to the legend, this heart was remassed as a stone. When it was thrown on the ground, it sprang to the height of a man[1]. According to Mas'ūdī, they opened it and found it enclosed a heart of small size, round like a ball. They cleaned it and found in it a clot of blood[2]. The exaggeration of the two traditions is self-evident.

Al-Ḥajjāj's success over the Khārijites was complete. In a period of less than two years he had hastened to annihilate their power. This remarkable achievement of the Governor was no less due to fact that he possessed rare military qualities but had equally acted with tact and prudence against a powerful enemy. While he had patiently wielded to harness the inhabitants of Kūfa against the terrific Shurāt, he had equally confided his trust in the command of Al-Muhallab against the Azraqites. Al-Ḥajjāj had evinced the virtues of a soldier on one front and that of a statesman on the other. We can unequivocally assert that he acted in this two-fold capacity of a soldier-statesman at this time.

Revolt of Al-Muṭarrif Ibn al-Mughīrah

Al-Ḥajjāj, who had just succeeded in warding off the danger of the Khārijites, was faced with another internal revolt. Al-Muṭarrif ibn al-Mughīrah, Governor of Madā'in, challenged the absolute authority of the Governor of 'Irāq in an open rebellion. He was, however, defeated and killed. And the revolt was quelled.

During the second half of the year 77 A.H. Al-Ḥajjāj had still to fight a powerful enemy in the person of Al-Muṭarrif ibn al-Mughīrah ibn Shu'ba. Appointed by Al-Ḥajjāj as Governor of Madā'in, Al-Muṭarrif had the audacity to declare that he would rule according to the principles of right and justice and protested against the despotic measures of the Governor. During the war with the Shurāt he had entered into a discussion with the envoys of Shabīb. He could not convince the Khārijites nor be convinced himself, for several of their religious and political opinions appeared to him ill-founded. While disapproving their religious proclivities, Al-Muṭarrif, however, approved the actions of their leader and admired him. He declared that he himself desired to shake the yoke of Al-Ḥajjāj and Caliph 'Abdul Malik. Then frightened

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 376.
2. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj', P. 147.

of what he had said and foreseeing that these words would reach the ears of Al-Ḥajjāj, he found his security in revolt. The fear that Al-Ḥajjāj inspired in the hearts of men was deep-founded.

At first Al-Muṭarrif did not communicate his design to his troops; he only ordered them to leave Madā'in and go towards Daskara. There in an inflamed speech he reminded them of the obligation of making a holy war against injustice and tyranny. He then exhorted his soldiers to shake the yoke of the Governor of 'Irāq and to rally themselves under his banner. They received his appeal to arms enthusiastically[1].

A victory over the mountains of Kūrdistān permitted the rebels to reach Hamadhān, where Muṭarrif's brother Ḥamzah was the Prefect. With a view to receive help from his brother, he arrived in the region of Māh Dīnār and wrote to his brother, "My expenses are excessive, the revictual of my troops is discomforting. Help, therefore, your brother by sending to him money and arms which you can spare". Yazīd, the freed slave of Al-Mughīrah ibn Shu'ba was charged with the message. "May your mother weep for your death", said Ḥamzah. "O you who cause the death of Al-Muṭarrif"! "I am not the cause of his death", replied the envoy. "It is rather he, who, is killing himself, gives death to me and God forbid that he be equally the cause of your death"! "Tell me, then, who was able to blind him like this"? "He blinded himself", replied the freed slave. Ḥamzah deplored this revolt but sent the help.

Al-Muṭarrif occupied the towns of Qumm and Qāshān, where he levied taxes. He also received reinforcement of a hundred men from Raī, where he had some friends. But the Prefect of Iṣfahān, Al-Barā' ibn Qabīṣa, feeling uneasy about these revolts in the neighbourhood, wrote an alarming letter to Al-Ḥajjāj, in which he related the rapid progress of the revolt and requested the Governor to send an army to quell it. Al-Ḥajjāj immediately dismissed Ḥamzah, the Prefect of Hamadhān and got him thrown into the prison by his successor. The preliminary step for circumscribing the disturbed area was taken immediately. At the same time Al-Ḥajjāj sent a contingent of 500 men towards Iṣfahān. With the contingents sent from the towns of Iṣfahān and Raī, the

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 989.

army reached the figure of 6,000 men[1].

Al-Muṭarrif was afraid to face superior forces. When he came within close distance, he sent to his adversaries, an eloquent man, called Bakīr ibn Hārūn al-Bajalī. "Go", said he to his orator, "and in face of your enemies, call them in the name of Qur'ān and the tradition of the Prophet. Reprimand them also for their detestable works" !

Mounted on a superb black horse, Bakīr appeared before lines of 'Adī ibn Wattād, Prefect of Raī, who was the general-in-chief. His high and resounding voice carried first some compliments to the enemy, and then he shouted, "Don't you know 'Abdul Malik ibn Marwān and Al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf are two tyrants, two usurpers, who only obey their caprice, who welcome suspicions against their subjects and who only consult their anger to condemn them to death" ? "You are telling a lie, O enemy of God" ! replied the troops. "They are not as you represent them", "Woe to you" ! replied Bakīr[2].

As nothing substantial came out of the visit of the envoy to the enemy camp, Al-Muṭarrif was compelled to fight His soldiers were put to the rout after a very fiery and long battle and he was killed. The victors sent his head to the Governor of 'Irāq and the revolt ceased with the death of Al-Muṭarrif in 77 A.H. (697 A.D.).

Al-Ḥajjāj, as usual, showered presents on the men who had distinguished themselves in this expedition by their courage and decapitated those who had rebelled against him.

Thus at the end of the year 77 A.H. the powerful Governor had established peace in a province that was ripe for sedition two years earlier and was equally threatened by a strong enemy on its frontiers. In this period, Al-Ḥajjāj had subdued the refractory forces at home, established discipline in the army and defeated the Khārijites. He had also quelled the revolt of Al-Muṭarrif. The absolute authority, that he enjoyed hereafter was challenged once again by 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn al-Ash'ath, who almost cost Al-Ḥajjāj his political career.

1. Ṭabarı, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 995-997.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 995-997.

V

AL-ḤAJJĀJ AS VICEROY

In this chapter we will study the work of Al-Ḥajjāj as a Viceroy. After the defeat of the Khārijites in 77 A.H. Al-Ḥajjāj was the virtual Viceroy of the Eastern Provinces. As Viceroy, he quelled the revolt of 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn Al-Ash'ath, extended the frontiers of the Umayyad rule over Transoxiana and Sindh and worked at a highly centralised administrative machinery.

The period between 78 A.H. (697 A.D.) and 81 A.H. (701 A.D.) was practically a period of consolidation and strength. Al-Ḥajjāj occupied himself with repairing the ravages of war and regulating the administration of the provinces completely subjugated. The Caliph 'Abdul Malik gave the administration of two new provinces of Khurāsān and Sijistān to Al-Ḥajjāj in 78 A.H. (697 A.D.), by way of reward for his services. Al-Ḥajjāj appointed in 78 A.H. Al-Muhallab, the victor of the Azraqites, Governor of the Province of Khurāsān and 'Ubaidullāh ibn Abī Bakra, the Governor of Sijistān.

Expedition against Rutabīl

In view of the fact that the state treasury had been depleted by the huge expenses of the war waged against the Khārijites, Al-Ḥajjāj took active steps to reimburse the royal coffers. While he appointed severe administrative officers to collect the taxes from the inhabitants of 'Irāq, he equally compelled the vassal kings to pay the tributes regularly and if they failed in these regular subscriptions, he turned to the recourse of war, as the only alternative. Such was the case with Rutabīl, king of Kābul. The latter a vassal of the Arabs had failed to pay the tribute to the Caliph. Al-Ḥajjāj, thereupon ordered in 79 A.H. (698 A.D.), 'Ubaidullāh ibn Abī Bakra, Governor of Sijistān, to wage war against the Turk King. He ordered the Governor not to return from the campaign he was undertaking, till he had conquered the kingdom of the 'barbarian' prince, and reduced his fortrees, killed

his warriors and made all his inheritors captive. Nothing more, nothing less"[1].

The obedient lieutenant then left in the direction of the north-east and engaged himself at the foot of the slope of the mountains, on which is built the city of Kābūl. At first everything went according to his desire and as Al-Ḥajjāj had ordered him. The invaders destroyed on their way castle and fortresses. The Turks slowly retreated everyday before the enemy and let them enter the heart of their country making their retreat in return, impossible. 'Ubaidullāh was assured of his success at every withdrawal of the enemy, when one day his soldiers saw with terror from the bottom of their groves that the heights and the neighbouring passages were strongly occupied by the enemy. Any attempt at invasion was futile.

'Ubaidullāh was obliged to negotiate a humiliating peace with Rutabīl, to whom he promised 500,000 dirhems, three of his children as hostages and an amnesty as long as he was the Governor of Sijistān ; all this on the only condition that 'Ubaidullāh aud his army came out of the mountains with their lives spared. The king of Kābūl accepted these terms when Shuraiḥ ibn Hāni'l-Ḥāri<u>th</u>ī, who commanded the militia originally from Kūfa declared that he would prefer martyrdom. He gave the signal for the fight and conducted his soldiers to death. 'Ubaidullāh, who had not fallen in the hands of the Turk, died of grief[2].

The grief of Al-Ḥajjāj was bitter when he heard of the tragic end of this expedition. He wrote to the Caliph for advice :

قد اردت أن اُوجه اليهم جند اكثيفا من اهل المصرين فأحببت
أن استطلع رأى امير المؤمنين فى ذلك فإن رأى لى بعثة ذلك الجند
أمضيته وإن لم يرذلك فإن امير المؤمنين اولى بجنده مع أنى أتخوف
ان لم يأت رتبيل ومن معه من المشركين جند كثيف عاجلا ان
يستولوا على ذلك الفرج كله

1. Tabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1036.
'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 311.
Balā<u>dh</u>urī, 'Futūḥ', P. 399.
2. Balā<u>dh</u>urī, 'Ansāb al-Ashrāf' P. 317.

"I wanted to send against the Turks a powerful army to be recruited at Kūfa and Baṣra but prior to that I preferred to take the advice of the Prince of the Believers on this subject. If he judges it appropriate that I have to make this recruitment, I will do it. If he does not consider it appropriate, I know well that the Prince of the Believers is liberal to dispose of his forces as he finds it fit. But I believe that if a powerful army is not sent immediately against Rutabīl and his polytheist subjects, they may make themselves master of all the neighbouring countries[1]. 'Abdul Malik who understood the urgency of the matter and the danger to which Al-Ḥajjāj had alluded wrote to him :

فان رائی فی ذلك ان تمضی رایك راشداً موفقاً

"In this my advice is that you follow your own feeling in as much as it will be wise and inspired by God"[2].

Al-Ḥajjāj decided to resume the expedition and nip the trouble in the bud. He put on foot one of the most beautiful armies of the period. It was the flower of 'Irāq. It consisted of 20,000 men of Kūfa and as many of Baṣra. The Governor did not spare any measure to equip these warriors. He gave the soldiers in advance, a consolidated amount of their salary in the beautiful dirhem and yellow dīnārs that the Caliph and he had coined since 76 A.H. The health of the young men who were leaving was subjected to a severe medical examination, over which he presided himself. The 'Kitāb al-Aghānī'[3] gives the details about this examination. The recruitment of men completed, Al-Ḥajjāj made the inspection of horses and arms. He excluded unsparingly all the defective and sick horses and bad arms. He encouraged with his generosity the warriors who were pointed to him for their bravery, also those who had the best equipment and the most beautiful horses. Two million dirhems were then distributed, in addition, to the ordinary salary. This army was called, "The Peacock army", because of the martial allure and the elegance

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1037.
Balādhurī, ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 318.

2. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, P. 1043.
''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 317-318.

3. 'Aghānī', Vol II, Pp. 155 and 158.
Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1044.

and splendour of the warriors who composed it[1].

Al-Ḥajjāj, first gave the command of this army to 'Uṭārid ibn 'Umair, the Tamīmite, who established his camp in Ahwāz; then he replaced this general by 'Ubaidullāh ibn Ḥujr. At last, changing his mind for the third time, he gave the command to 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn Muḥammed ibn al-Ash'ath al-Kindī, whose family originally from Yemen, belonged to the most ancient Arab nobility.

'Abdur Raḥmān, son of Muḥammed and grandson of Al-Ash'ath is sometimes simply called Ibn al-Ash'ath. He was in the beginning one of the favourites of Al-Ḥajjāj, receiving besides a large salary, rich presents from him. The intimacy between the two extended to matrimonial ties. Al-Ḥajjāj, who did not neglect any means of ennobling his family, demanded and obtained for his son Muḥammed, the hand of Maimūna, sister of 'Abdur Raḥmān. Unfortunately, the latter was a man very conceited, ostantatious and haughty. "I have never seen an Amīr above me", said he[2]. His wounding arrogance and his short-lived pretentions turned the Viceroy of 'Irāq against him. This coldness soon engendered into a reciprocal and incurable hatred. "I cannot see him", said Al-Ḥajjāj, "without feeling the desire to put him to death". One day during a reception, at the moment when 'Abdur Raḥmān was entering the hall, he again said to one of the companions, "Look as he comes. How I have envied to cut his neck". 'Āmir ash-Sha'bī, in whose ears these words had fallen, reported them secretly to 'Abdur Raḥmān, who replied, "My feelings towards Al-Ḥajjāj are the same and if God grants me life and to him also. I will neither have any peace nor rest, until I have uprooted him from power"[3].

It was to this sworn enemy that the Viceroy of 'Irāq gave the command of the army. The choice was controversial and thought inadvisable. The relative of 'Abdur Raḥmān themselves were not only surprised but frightened at the appointment. Ismā'īl ibn al-Ash'ath the paternal uncle of the new general said to al-Ḥajjāj in a meeting, "Do not put him at the head of this expedition, for I fear that he will revolt. When he has crossed

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1044.
2. Balādhurī, ' 'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 318.
3. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1043.
   Balādhurī, ' 'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 318-319.

the bridge of the Euphrates he will not recognise any authority of any Amir". "He is very afraid of me", replied Al-Ḥajjāj "and will not dare to revolt against me or try to abscond from my obedience". "And he persisted in the choice he had made. The only motive which could have promoted the son of Yūsuf to make this appointment was surely, his desire to get rid of this rival. Al-Ḥajjāj who was by nature jealous and vindictive could not forget that 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn al-Ash'ath had some political understanding with Shabīb and had obstinately failed to precipitate action against the Shurāt leader inspite of his repeated messages and orders. Al-Ḥajjāj thought it an opportune moment to give a trial to the strength of his personal enemy and, therefore, despatched him to fight a distant enemy. Unfortunately this move of Al-Ḥajjāj led him to an unforeseen crisis.

When he was appointed commander-in-chief of the expeditionary force against Rutabīl, 'Abdur Raḥmān invaded Kābūlistān. Rutabīl quickly reassembled an army but from the very beginning he was forced to fight in retreat. Everyday he abandoned a village or fortress to 'Abdur Raḥmān. The latter, after every new conquest, sent a tax-collector, escorted by armed detachments, to levy the tribute. He established his horsemen, guards and garrisons on the heights in the gorges and equally established a regular service of posts with the conquered towns. These were happy beginnings. He, however, did not pursue his movements right in the heart of enemy territory. And when he had collected much booty and conquered vast areas, he came back with the bulk of the army to Bust in Sijistān[1]. He had the intention to take rest for a few months and then march into the enemy country in the following years when his soldiers were better acquainted with the hilly regions. 'Abdur Raḥmān, while announcing to his superior Amīr his first success also acquainted him with his intentions. It was in the year 80 A.H. (699 A.D.)[2].

Al-Ḥajjāj could not withstand any delay from 'Abdur Raḥmān. He got furious and replied by three messages one after the other. "Your letter is to hand", he said the first time, "and I have understood what you have related. But it is the letter of a

1. Balādhurī, ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 320-321.
Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1044-1046.
Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 366.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1046.
''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 323.

man who loves peace, who looks for rest in armistice, who uses caution towards an enemy little in numbers and despicable". In the second letter, Al-Ḥajjāj appeared to consent to a delay. He ordered the soldiers to till the land and settle in the country till God granted them complete victory. In the third letter, Al-Ḥajjāj reiterated his purpose, stated in the first message. He threatened to replace 'Abdur Raḥmān by his brother Isḥāq ibn Muḥammed, if he failed to comply as desired[1].

When one considers the pains that Al-Ḥajjāj had taken, the sacrifices that he had made to send to the extreme border of the Muslim Empire an army so powerful, if one adds that he had also reinforced it by the contingents brought from Ṭabaristān, one can excuse his impatience at the delay of 'Abdur Raḥmān. But, if he had waited a little longer, the pretentions of 'Abdur Raḥmān, if really so, would have become more obvious. The blame, therefore, for the revolt of 'Abdur Raḥmān cannot be, under his precipitation, thrown altogether on the rebel general. Al-Ḥajjāj was also thus at fault, in inciting the arrogance of the commander-in-chief to break into an open revolt.

'Abdur Raḥmān in fact, was looking forward for such a provocation and now that he was offered the opportunity, he hastened to utilise it. He communicated the message of Al-Ḥajjāj to to his brother Isḥāq, threatening him under pain of death, to disclose its contents. Then he reassembled his forces and addressed them in these words : "Soldiers, you know it that I am a faithful and loyal adviser to you ; it is only your good that I seek ; it is for your interests, wherever they are involved, that I vouchsafe. Many amongst you, of whom I had sought advice, men full of experience and prudence, in matters of war, had approved my manner of conducting the campaign ; they had induced me not to press on penetrating in the enemy country. I had written to your Amīr Al-Ḥajjāj about it. However, he has in his replies treated me as a coward and incapable person. He orders us to push without any delay inside this enemy area, where your brothers met their death yesterday". 'Abdur Raḥmān who had rightly approached his point of view, condescended to the soldiers with a little appraisal adding "As for me, I am only your equal ; if you advance, I will advance ; if you stay, I will stay". He had hit the mark.

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1053.
'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 324.

This clever speech produced the desired effect, the soldiers impelled, some by their hatred for Al-Ḥajjāj, others for fear of 'Abdur Raḥmān, rushed towards him and surrounded him, shouting, "We scorn the orders of the enemy of God. We do not wish to listen to him ; we do not want to obey him".

Taking the signal for revolt 'Amīr ibn Wāthila al-Kinānī orator and poet, spoke in a fiery speech, "Al-Ḥajjāj little cares to expose you to danger, by sending you, without any consideration, to an area full of gorges and ravines. If, in fact, you return victorious and laden with booty, he will devour himself the revenues of this country; he will take himself the money and use it to increase his power. If on the contrary, the Turks win, you will be the most detested enemies of Al-Ḥajjāj, who will not consider your sufferings and make you perish. Shake, therefore, the yoke of the enemy of God, Al-Ḥajjāj and take the oath of loyalty to 'Abdur Raḥmān. You are witness to the fact that I am the first to proclaim the dismissal of Al-Ḥajjāj". "Yes, Yes", cried the soldiers from all sides, "We also deny the enemy of God".

A third orator, 'Abdul Mūmin ibn Shabath, the Tamīmite, commander of the guards of 'Abdur Raḥmān assured that the intention of the Viceroy of 'Irāq was to keep them quartered indefinitely in these foreign regions, far from their families and their friends, "Take the oath of loyalty to your chief", he shouted, "Then go and fight your enemy ; drive him out of your country". "Yes we will go to 'Irāq and drive out Al-Ḥajjāj, the enemy of God"[1], shouted the soldiers enthusiastically and pressing around 'Abdur Raḥmān, they took the oath of loyalty to him. They pronounced the revocation of Al-Ḥajjāj, promised to follow their general and support him with all their strength in order to drive the tyrant out of 'Irāq and appoint another Governor in his place. No mention was made of 'Abdul Malik at this time. These events took place in the year 81 A.H. (700 A.D.).

Revolt of 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn al-Ash'ath

Al-Ḥajjāj, who had recently triumphed over his enemies, great and small, was busy in the day-to-day administration of the country when he received from 'Abdur Raḥmān the letter in which

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1053-1054.

he announced his revolt. Al-Ḥajjāj, who had always suspected the intentions of 'Abdur Raḥmān, had in fact, not expected him to fling a challenge at his authority in this flagrant way. He had wished 'Abdur Raḥmān to spend his energy in fighting an external foe or die in the expedition. He had, therefore, not prepared himself to face him at home. Al-Ḥajjāj's difficulties in countenancing this personal enemy were all the more grave because of the administrative measures that he was undertaking at the time. These measures, although, fiscal and economic had, no doubt, their political repercussions. They hastened to augment the strength of his enemy against him. Al-Ḥajjāj did not foresee these political effects at the moment and, therefore, felt greatly uneasy at the news of the revolt. He made an appeal to arms from the pulpit of Kūfa. At the same time he sent Sa'īd ibn Jubair to 'Abdur Raḥmān with a message full of threats but the general remained unshakable. Moreover, he acted with such persuasion on the messenger, that the latter too deflected from his purpose.

Before taking the route to 'Irāq, 'Abdur Raḥmān concluded a peace-treaty with Rutabīl, who was till recently his enemy. By the terms of the treaty, the king of Kābūlistān was to be exempted from the tribute so long as he was alive, if Al-Ḥajjāj was defeated; if on the contrary, Al-Ḥajjāj was victorious, Rutabīl would give refuge to the fugitive and his companions in his country. He would protect the general with all his power[1].

Ibn al-Ash'ath had fortified his position in his rear and in order to make it more powerful and secure he invited the Governor of Khurāsān to join him. He was still in Sijistān, when he wrote a letter to Al-Muhallab to draw him to his side. But far from being shaken, the old warrior strongly condemned the project of his cousin and dissuaded him from shedding his country men's blood.

At the news of the revolt from 'Abdur Raḥmān, Al-Muhallab wrote the following letter to Al-Ḥajjāj :—

فان اهل العراق قد اقبلوا اليك مثل السيل المنحدر من عل ليس شئ يرده حتى ينتهى
إلى قراره - وإن لاهل العراق شرة فى أول مخرجهم وصبابة إلى ابناءهم ونساءهم
فليس شئ يردهم حتى يسقطوا إلى اهليهم ويشموا أولادهم ثم واقفهم عندها فان
الله ناصرك عليهم إن شاء الله -

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1055.

"The inhabitants of 'Irāq are marching against you. These men at the beginning of their revolt are full of frenzy like the torrent falling from the mountains which cannot stop until it reaches the place of its rest: they yearn with ardour for their children and for their wives; and nothing is capable of stopping them until they are united with their kith and kin. Wait, therefore, and do not attack them, until they have returned to their hearths; then, God will grant you victory". Al-Ḥajjāj did not appreciate the advice of the old warrior. He felt rather irritated at the message and shouted, فعل الله به وفعل لا والله مالی نظر ولکن لابن عمه نصح۔

"May God doubly punish Al-Muhallab. These are not my interests he seeks but those of his cousin"[1]! And advised by the Syrian Amīr, Sufyān ibn al-Abrad, he chose war[2]. Al-Ḥajjāj, in fact, showed his prudence and sagacity in refusing to accept the advice of Al-Muhallab at this time. He could not undertake a risk so grave and allow the rebels to return to their homes and wait for their passions to cool down. The rebels, if given the chance, could equally get rid of him and undo his work in face of his passive behaviour. 'Abdur Rahmān had prepared them for such a bid. Al-Ḥajjāj had wisely seen through the pretensions of his enemy. He had, in fact, never entrusted his personal security to any other person than to his master or to his Syrian compatriots. He, therefore, preferred to fight his enemy notwithstanding difficulties that faced him and prepared himself to stem the stream that rushed towards him.

The forces of 'Abdur Rahmān started for Kūfa, midst triumphal proclamations of poets and orators.

"Because of the Thaqīf two imposters came (into the world); the ancient who is dead and the new who is still alive"[3]. While crossing Sijistān and Kirmān the rebel general appointed his own lieutenants in the towns and seized the money that he found in the public treasury[4]. The discipline among his soldiers was not very stern and the moral of the troops was rather low. Thus

1. Balādhurī, ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 329 and 335-336. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1058-1059.
2. ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 338.
3. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1056. 'Aghanī', Vol. V, P. 159. Balādhurī, ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 328.
4. Balādhurī, ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 332.

Aghānī[1] reports that one of the soldiers of 'Abdur Raḥmān, the poet Abū Ḥizāba al-Walīd ibn Ḥanīfa pawned the saddle of his horse, in order to obtain the favours of a lady harper. 'Abdur Raḥmān on learning of the incident not only laughed at the adventure but also rebought the saddle and paid the poet a sum of a thousand dirhems. At the recital of this scandel, Al-Ḥajjāj said,

أيجاهر فى عسكره بالفجور فيضحك ولا ينكر ظفرت به إن شاء الله-

"He ('Abdur Raḥmān) then openly encourages vice in his army and far from disapproving he laughed at it. I shall triumph over this man, if God wills it" ! Whereas Al-Ḥajjāj retained the control of his army in his hands by his personal integrity and solidity, 'Abdur Raḥmān left much of the initiative in the hands of his soldiers and thus allowed them to have their way at his expense. And as a result when his army reached the town of Iṣṭakhr in Fāris, it proclaimed the deposition of Caliph 'Abdul Malik whose name had not been pronounced in the first oath taking. The army gathered around its chief; then a certain Tīḥān ibn Abjar taking off his clothes shouted "I throw away the 'father of flies' (It was the nickname of 'Abdul Malik) as I throw away my coat". All the soldiers except a small number, pronounced the deposition of the Caliph, swore to throw away the imams of error and wage holy war against the sacrilegious"[2], i.e. against Al-Ḥajjāj and the Umayyads. The revolt that had originated in the arrogant behaviour of the one and the audacity of the other to undermine it was no longer limited to the desire of the army chiefs to a change of leadership. In their desire to subvert the established authority, they flung a challenge at the Caliph. This dexterous manoeuvre initiated by the rebel-leader had succeeded wonderfully well. He needed the support of the people of 'Irāq to accomplish his design.

The fight started in right earnest. The cavalry sent by Al-Ḥajjāj against the advance guards of the rebel was constantly driven back and compelled to fight in retreat. Frightened by this first failure as well as the seditious sentiments which secretly ruled the hearts of all the citizens of Kūfa and Baṣra, Al-Ḥajjāj wrote to the Caliph requesting him to send immediately Syrian troops. At the same time, he left Kūfa for Baṣra where the first blows of

1. 'Aghānī', Vol. XIX, Pp. 154-155.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1057.

the enemy were to fall[1].

The Caliph felt very agitated at the news of this new trouble. He immediately consulted his cousin Khālid ibn Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiyah. "The Prince of the Believers", replied Khālid, who saw the Caliph disturbed, "this revolt would become terrible if it came from Khurāsān (Al-Muhallab) but since it comes from Sijistān, you have nothing to fear"! These words calmed down a little the fear of the Caliph, who went out of the palace and in a speech addressed to the people shouted, "I have spent my entire life in fighting the inhabitants of 'Irāq and they have hastened the day of my death. O God! give them for their masters the swords of the Syrians, until they perform Your will and after performing it, they may no longer exist to provoke Your anger"[2]!

Al-Ḥajjāj, on the other hand, kept the Caliph informed of the course of war and the route of the rebels. He also acquainted him of the men who had joined 'Abdur Raḥmān and deserted him. Everyday, too, he received reinforcements of horsemen who arrived from Syria to the number of 160 by way of the posts. When he had assembled an army consisting mainly of Syrians, Al-Ḥajjāj left Baṣra and went to establish his camp at Tustar, in Ahwāz. He sent two big detachments of horsemen to occupy the banks of the Dujail but both of them were routed like the advance guard, by the rebels on the ninth of the month of Dhū'lhijja in 81. A.H. (January 701 A.D.)[3].

The fugitives entered Tustar at the moment when Al-Ḥajjāj was addressing the people from the pulpit. A man announced in his ear the defeat of his advance guards, "Soldiers"! shouted he, "retake the road to Baṣra to choose a camp and a favourable battlefield, to get provisions and ammunition because this place is not propitious"[4]. Al-Ḥajjāj lost some 8,000 men in his retreat[5]. It was almost a rout. According to Ṭabarī[6], Al-Ḥajjāj remembered during the flight the letter of Al-Muhallab and admired

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1057.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1059-1060.
   Balādhurī, ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 337-338.
3. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1062.
4. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1061.
   Balādhurī, ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 342.
5. Baādhurī, ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 341.
   Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Ibid.
6. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1061.

his counsel. We cannot, however, agree with Ṭabarī, that Al-Ḥajjāj repented for not having followed the advice of Al-Muhallab. Al-Ḥajjāj, had already rejected that advice on substantially sound grounds. He could not repent over any advice which could have endangered his life and position and brought worse consequences in its wake. What Al-Ḥajjāj admired at this time in Al-Muhallab, was his personal quality of a soldier, that had withstood the attempts of the Azraqites to foil his action. There were always moments in Al-Ḥajjāj's life when he admired certain personal aspects of persons with whom he had disagreed at times or were equally his enemies. It was such a moment, when he opened the letter of Al-Muhallab and read it again.

While on his retreat from Tustar, Al-Ḥajjaj was worried for a sum of a hundred thousand dirhems that he had brought for the needs of the war, he distributed the amount among the generals, apprising them that they would have to return it to the treasury. Al-Ḥajjāj always confided his trust in his subordinates and gave them opportunities to show that they could be relied upon.

Leaving the town of Baṣra, Al-Ḥajjāj went to establish his camp at Az-Zāwiya at the end of the month of Dhū'lḥijja in the year 81 A.H. (February 701 A.D.). He left his cousin Al-Ḥakam ibn Ayyūb at Baṣra in the capacity of a lieutenant. The general of the rebels, in the meantime. entered the city without striking a blow and was welcomed as a liberator. All the inhabitants took the oath of loyalty to 'Abdur Raḥmān and promised to help him in this holy war. The readers of the Qur'ān were his most zealous followers. He was equally supported by the new Muslim converts. The reason for their support is singular enough. The son of Yūsuf seeing from the reports of his commissioners, that the Jews and Christians embraced Islām to escape the Jizya and settled in the city. leaving the country side unproductive, ordered his administrators to send these farmers to their villages and to levy taxes on them as formerly. There was much lamentation among these villagers and these farmers who driven out of their homes, did not know where to seek refuge and wandered crying, "O Muḥammed! O Muḥammed"[1]! It is not, therefore, surprising that 'Abdur Raḥmān arriving under such circumstances, was received, as a liberator of Baṣra. The readers of the Qur'ān equually

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1062 and 1122.
Balādhurī, ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 342.

sympathised with these people who had embraced their faith and considered the administrative measures of Al-Ḥajjāj as anti-religious undertakings. 'Abdur Raḥmān entered Baṣra on the 29th of the month of Dhū'l-ḥijja in 81 A.H. (February 101 A.D.).

At the beginning of the year 82 A.H. (701 A.D.), the forces of Al-Ḥajjāj and 'Abdur Raḥmān started fighting in the plain which extended between the two camps (Baṣra and Az-Zāwiya). The great battle took place at the end of the month of Muḥarram (March 701 A.D.). The Syrians were overthrown by the rebels and they began to grumble against Al-Ḥajjāj saying, "O, that you had waited for the reinforcements from Syria" ! A detachment of 'Irāq entered Al-Ḥajjāj's camp, and approached his tents and fought with the people of his house. Al-Ḥajjāj whose position had never been so critical, feared that he was lost; he bent on his knees for prayers; then drawing his sword he shouted,

لله در مصعب ما كان أكرمه حين نزل به ما نزل

"What an admirable man Muṣ'ab was! What more beautiful death than his"[1] ! Those who were fleeing around him understood the meaning of these words and the resolution implied therein. This was another instance when he admired his adversary, not for the cause he had upheld but for the end he had preferred. Muṣ'ab had preferred to die fighting than accept the security offered by 'Abdul Malik. Al-Ḥajjāj equally resolved to die than abandon the battlefield. His men rallied under his orders to die with him, when the soldiers came running, carrying the news that the dauntless Sufyān ibn al-Abrad, commanding the right wing had put to the rout the greater part of the army of 'Abdur Raḥmān by a vigorous charge of horseman. Al-Ḥajjāj, would not believe anything of them; nevertheless it was true. When he yielded to the evidence, he prostrated himself to thank God[2]. Then according to a tradition reported by Ṭabarī he made his herald shout at the fugitives, "There is no security for such and such", and the herald cited the names of those who belonged to the nobility. The common people thinking that amnesty was for all save for this small number, came back but Al-Ḥajjāj did not say, "I give security to the mass

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1064.
'Aghānī', Vol. X, P. 111.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1064-1065.
Balādhurī, ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 345.

of men". Thus, when these unfortunate men had reassembled, he disarmed them and massacred them pitilessly. It is reported by the same source that they were 11,000. The fact is, however controversial. According to Aghānī, Al-Ḥajjāj, when victorious stopped the slaughter and honoured all those who came back[1]. The latter evidence is acceptable for it fits with the usual practice of Al-Ḥajjāj, who granted security in such cases. The numerous hordes of 'Irāqian soldiers who returned to Kūfa when sent against the Shurāt, had also been spared with disdain. Al-Ḥajjāj, in our opinion did not perpetrate any executions for obvious reasons. He had gained his end and could not retain it with bloodshed.

Al-Ḥajjāj entered Baṣra and stopped in the house of Al-Muhallab. He prohibited the Syrians to dwell in the city[2]. *In one of his speeches, after having* congratulated them on their victory of Az-Zāwiya, he said to them,

لاتبغوا ولا تظلموا وإياكم أن يبلغني أن رجلا منكم دخل بيت إمرأة فلا يكون له عندي
عقوبة إلا السيف. أنا الغيور ابن الغيور، لا أواهي في الريبة ولا أصبر على الفاحشة

"You will oppress no body and commit no exactions. Woe to you if it be brought to my notice that one of my soldiers has entered the house of a woman ; he will receive no other punishment from me than that of the sword. I am the most jealous son of the very jealous, who will never spare the suspects, who will never support the libertines[3]. Al-Ḥajjāj knew that the success of the army on the battle field depended on its moral discipline. And he always upheld that principle.[1]

After his defeat, 'Abdur Raḥmān, on the other hand, left for Kūfa, with the soldiers who were from this city and also with the chosen cavalrymen from Baṣra. Like Baṣra, Kūfa received the rebel general with the same warm demonstrations of joy and sympathy. The discontented arrived every day to join the forces of 'Abdur Raḥmān and thus helped to fill the void that the defeat

1. 'Aghānī', Vol. X, P. 311.
2. Tabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1066.
   Balādhurī, ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 349.
3. Balādhurī, ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 350.
4. Tabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1066 and 1071.
   Balādhuri, ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 349.

of Az-Zāwiya had made in the rebel army[1]. These were the men, it seems, who had refused their homage to Al-Ḥajjāj and not laid down their arms.

As to the position of Al-Ḥajjāj, it was still precarious inspite of the victory of Az-Zāwiya and the reoccupation of Baṣra. His communications with Damascus from where he received his reinforcements were entirely cut off by Kūfa, which was no longer occupied by him and by the impenetrable Syrian desert. He wanted to make an approach to the Caliph at any cost. Therefore, in the middle of the month of Ṣafar of the same year (82 A.H. April, 701 A.D.) i.e. fifteen days after his entry into Baṣra, he appointed his cousin Ayyūb ibn al-Ḥakam, commissioner of this city and taking the edge of the desert went rapidly to the north with his army[2]. 'Abdur Rahmān ibn Muhammed read his intentions and sent against him a strong detachment of horsemen which did not cease to pursue the forces of Al-Ḥajjāj between Al-'Udhaib and Al-Qādisiyya and pursued it with firmness and even prevented it from encamping. Fighting with rapidity and marching parallel towards the north, the two armies arrived in a vast plain, slightly undulated, where they took their positions. Al-Ḥajjāj established his camp in a narrow place called Dair Qurra; 'Abdur Rahmān ibn al-'Abbās, who commanded the rebels at this time, posted himself in a neighbouring village, called Dair al-Jamājim. 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn Muḥammed soon after left Kūfa to take up the command of his army. "Didn't he see", said Al-Ḥajjāj later, "that the augurs were against him, when I camped at Dair Qurra (Convent of Welfare) whilst he camped at Dair al-Jamājim (Convent of Skulls)"[3]?

The hatred and aversion of all the people of 'Irāq for Al-Ḥajjāj, increased immeasurably the army of the rebels. It reached the figure of 100,000 men receiving a regular salary and this figure was almost doubled according to Ṭabarī[4] by the strength of the freed slaves (Mawālīs) who had resorted to arms in order to sustain the same cause. The revolt that had been started by 'Abdūr Raḥmān ibn al-Ash'ath as a military manoeuvre against

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1071.
   ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 353.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1072.
   ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 352.
3. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1072.
4. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Ibid.

Al-Ḥajjāj soon became a country-wide move aimed at foiling Al-Ḥajjāj's attempt to consolidate his strength against the 'Irāqians. It was not a mere 'Mawālī' uprising. It was a conjoint effort of the people of 'Irāq to defeat a stern and severe administrator. This was the second phase of the struggle, when the revolt of 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn al-Ash'ath turned into a regular war against Al-Ḥajjāj.

In the interval while the two forces faced each other for a decisive fight, the chiefs of the Quraish and the Syrians counsellors and courtiers of 'Abdul Malik at Damascus desired a peaceful settlement. They pressed the Caliph to start negotiations in this manner. "If the inhabitants of 'Irāq only demand to be delivered of Al-Ḥajjāj", said they to the Caliph, "It is an easier thing than to make war. In this case dismiss Al-Ḥajjāj because in this way you will sincerely win them over to your side, you will spare further shedding of blood on their part as well as ours"[1]. 'Abdul Malik, who forgot for the moment that people were jealous of Al-Ḥajjāj, immediately called his brother Muḥammed ibn Marwān, Governor of Mauṣil. The latter accompanied by 'Abdullāh son of the Caliph, was charged to return to 'Irāq, to carry to the rebels *proposals for peace*. "*If the 'Irāqians consented to lay down their* arms, Al-Ḥajjāj would be dismissed and leave 'Irāq. The inhabitants of 'Irāq would receive a fixed salary as the Syrians. 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn Muḥammed would take refuge in a city of his choice in 'Irāq; he would remain governor of this city, during his life. The new governor of 'Irāq should be Muḥammed ibn Marwān. If, on the contrary, these proposals were not received with the favour that they deserved, Al-Ḥajjāj would continue fighting the rebels with the son and brother of the Caliph under his orders"[2].

Al-Ḥajjāj could not receive a worse news than this. He was dismayed and when he learnt of the designs of 'Abdul Malik, acting without consulting him, he wrote to the Caliph, "O the Prince of the Believers! Be assured that if you grant my dismissal to the people of 'Irāq, they will not take long to revolt against your authority and take up arms against you. Your concessions will have no result but increase their audacity against you. *Has it*

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tarīkh', Vol. II, P. 1072.
2. Ṭabarī .'Tārīkh' ,Vol. II, Pp. 1073-1074.

thou not seen or heard that after having at their head Al-Ashtar, they threw themselves on 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān? When this prince asked them what they desired, they replied, "The dismissal of Sa'īd ibn al-'Āsi. 'Uthmān dismissed him. However, hardly did the year pass when they entered into a campaign with the Caliph and assassinated him. You can only pay a man in his own coin. Then may God be your helper in the project you have entertained and grant you His salvation"[1]. This interesting citation from history and the timely warning did not deter 'Abdul Malik from his resolution and Muhammed ibn Marwān and 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abdul Malik reached the camp of Al-Hajjāj. It was 'Abdullāh who went out of the camp to deliver in a loud voice, the proposals of his father, to the inhabitants of 'Irāq. "We will come in the evening", replied the rebels. In the meantime they held an important council presided over by 'Abdur Rahmān and attended among others by the military chiefs, the chiefs of the tribes and the horsemen of the army. In face of this imposing reunion at the decisive moment, 'Abdur Rahmān spoke in favour of accepting a peace which would be honourable and advantageous. He pressed on his officers to agree to the proposals of the Caliph, when the two armies were on an equal footing and who knew the following day of the battle they would repent for the loss of the unique chance? It appeared that the defeat of Az-Zāwiya had made the general more wise but the 'Irāqians faithful to their habit of wilfulness, refused to follow their chief. The soldiers from all sides furiously thronged round the general and clamoured "No, by God! no, we will not accept these proposals". And soon with a unanimity still larger, than that in Fāris, they pronounced the deposition of Caliph 'Abdul Malik[1]. This was the third phase of the struggle. In the wake of their partial success they turned their personal antagonism for Al-Hajjāj into a regular campaign against the Umayyad rule. The age-old enemity of the 'Irāqians for the Syrians swept the country once again.

We can guess with what joy Al-Hajjāj received the news of the failure of the negotiations. He again became an indispensable man. He said to the messengers when they brought this news to him and came to rally themselves under his orders, "It is for you that I wage the war. My power is your power"[2]. And when the

1. Tabari, 'Tārikh', Vol. II, Pp. 1073-1074.
2. Tabari, 'Tārikh', Vol. II, P. 1075.

two princes greeted him with the name of Amīr because he had now the command of the army, with what good grace he had returned the same greeting! For where his master failed him, his God had saved him.

The hostilities were resumed with a double vigour. A plan of battle was drawn up. Al-Ḥajjāj remained in the centre; to his right was 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn Sulaim, the Kalbite; to his left was 'Umāra ibn Tamīm al-Lakhmī. Sufyān ibn al-Abrad, the Kalbite as always was incharge of the cavalry, and 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn Ḥabīb al-Ḥakamī commanded the infantry[1].

Every day the two rival armies were drawing near to each other to come to grips and every day they fought bloody battles. The final victory seemed to belong to the side which could hold the longer, the vicissitudes of war. The Syrians, however, fought under grave odds. The 'Irāqians received their provisions in abundance from 'Irāq and the rich plains of Sawād and Baṣra. The camp of Al-Ḥajjāj, on the contrary, was deprived of direct communications with Damascus and, therefore, suffered from lack of provisions. Besides, the prices of food arose. However, the Syrians faced these stringencies bravely and continued fighting the rebels morning and evening and in one of the first encounters they killed the leader of the readers of the Qur'ān, Jabala ibn Zahr. These readers of the Qur'ān had fought with tenacity but were put to the rout. Their leader's head was carried to Al-Ḥajjāj. "Rejoice O Syrians"! said he. "This is the beginning of the victory. Never by God, has any battle been won without the death of a great Yemen; and he was renowned in his country"[2]. The Yemenites of Kūfa were the most enthusiastic supporters of 'Abdur Raḥmān. He was a Yemenite. His brothers, however, were not on his side[3].

Since the days of Az-Zāwiya, weeks elapsed in small encounters and skirmishes, odd battles and negotiations. According to Ṭabarī, the armies remained at Dair al-Jamājim for a hundred days and that it was only in the month of Sha'bān 82 A.H. (September 701 A.D.) that the great battle of Dair al-Jamājim was fought[4].

It lasted the whole day. The battle was bloody and tenaciously

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1075.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1090.
3. 'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 326.
4. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1070.

held out. But the forces of 'Abdur Raḥmān had the advantage till the evening, when a little before sunset, the Syrians charged the rebels with irresistible fury that they took to the flight and to the discomfort of the warriors of 'Irāq, the Syrians penetrated the camp of the soldiers of 'Irāq midst shouts of 'Allah Akbar'. 'Abdur Raḥmān who saw his followers desert him, was advised by one of his family members to escape and prepare to meet his enemy on some other occasion. Al-Ḥajjāj who watched the 'Irāqians desert their leader said to his Syrians forces as usual, "Let them disperse. Don't follow them", and the herald shouted at the same time, "Whoever comes back will enjoy amnesty".

Al-Ḥajjāj entered Kūfa like an angry conqueror. It was the hour of vengeance. The captives taken at Dair al-Jamājim appeared before the tribunal, one after the other and the Viceroy put to them the terrible question. "Do you confess that you have been an infidel"? If the accused replied, "Yes", he was allowed to take the oath of loyalty; if he replied, 'No', he was beheaded. "Do you confess that you have been an infidel"? demanded Al-Ḥajjāj of an old man who belonged to the tribe of Khath'am and who had remained on the other side of the Euphrates during the fight. "How wicked I would be", replied the old man, "If after having served God for eighty years, I should consider myself capable of infidelity"[1]! "Then, I am going to put you to death", replied Al-Ḥajjāj. "It matters little, for I will only survive the time that elapses between the two drinks of a donkey. I am waiting for death morning and evening". "Cut his neck", ordered Al-Ḥajjāj and the old man was decapitated. And like him a great number of captured preferred to pay with their lives. According to Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, it was by the order of Caliph 'Abdul Malik that Al-Ḥajjāj insisted on making the prisoners confess that they had lost their faith in revolting against the Caliph[2]. We do not, however, concur with the opinion of Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi. 'Abdul Malik, we have seen, had always acted as a restraining influence on Al-Ḥajjāj. In Al-Ḥajjāj's eyes, the rebels had not only been disloyal by revolting against the representative of the Caliph but equally renounced Islām by denouncing the authority of the

1. Tabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1097-1098.
2. 'Iqd al-Farīd', Vol. I, P. 186 and Vol. III, P. 24.

Caliph. The question was, therefore, it seems, posed by Al-Ḥajjāj himself.

After his defeat at Dair al-Jamājim, 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn al-Ash'ath encamped at Maskin with his shattered forces. After a stay of a month in Kūfa, Al-Ḥajjāj led his forces against him. It was on the banks of the river Dujail, that the two sides fought the great battle. They fought for fifteen days when the commander of the vanguard of Al-Ḥajjāj was killed. This loss troubled the Viceroy but he exhorted his men to fight valiantly. The next day, the Syrians, however, faired no better. The illustrious Syrian general Sufyān ibn al-Abrad was put to the rout after a very severe fight. Al-Ḥajjāj was alarmed at this failure. By dint of his vigour and the help of 'Abdul Malik ibn al-Muhallab, who was with him, he succeeded in rallying the dispersed cavalry in the plain. Then, taking the command of the troops himself, he led them to battle and attacked the rebels from all sides at the same time. This formidable shock confused the rebels who fought in retreat leaving several of their chiefs dead on the battlefield[1].

Nevertheless, they did not believe themselves to be defeated. Al-Ḥajjāj could not overtake them near the canals or the rivulets which cut the plain of Ahwāz. It was then that according to a tradition reported by Ṭabarī[2], that a native shepherd offered his services to Al-Ḥajjāj and showed him a practicable way through the bushes and marshes. Al-Ḥajjāj put on the march an army of 4,000 Syrians and attacked the enemy in the middle of the night. The 'Irāqians surrounded by the canals and not knowing where to flee, jumped into the water and were drowned[3]. And those who fought, perished entirely. The prisoners were slaughtered and 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn al-Ash'ath was defeated for the third time. He took to flight in the direction of Sijistān[4]. After a few more desertions from his camp, 'Abdur Raḥmān took refuge at the court of the King of Kābūlistān. Al-Ḥajjāj's triumph over his enemy was complete. The people of 'Irāq had failed to get rid of their inveterate enemy. Al-Ḥajjāj, thereafter reinforced the Syrian forces. The 'Irāqite militia had to be content with the scanty pension and maintain the Syrians for it. To consolidate his

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, 1100.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1124.
3. Ṭabarī, Ibid.
4. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1100-1101.

strength further, Al-Ḥajjāj built the fortified town of Wāsit in 83 A.H. and made it the seat of his government. He also transferred the bulk of the Syrian forces there. Al-Ḥajjāj henceforth planted his rule on the military strength of his Syrian forces. There was no other way if unity of the country was to be preserved.

It was at Wāsit his new capital that Al-Ḥajjāj, according to Tabarī, instituted the tribunal to try the accused who had taken part in the revolt of 'Abdur Raḥmān. Sitting on his throne, Al-Ḥajjāj made the prisoners appear before him. Many of these prisoners had been sent by Yazīd ibn al-Muhallab after the latter's victory over 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn al-'Abbās, a deflected leader of 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn al-Ash'ath. "In what hope did you embrace the cause of 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn Muhammed ibn al-Ash'ath"? he asked one of the captives Al-Halqām ibn Na'im. "Did you hope that he would be the caliph"? "Yes, it is that what I hoped, and my ambition was to be raised by him to the dignity that you hold from 'Abdul Malik". The commander of the police of the Governor Haushab ibn al-Yazīd, whom this answer irritated, rose and cut the neck of the rebel[2].

The poet A'shā Hamdān whose name was 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn 'Abdullāh had been one of the most arduous to excite the soldiers against Al-Ḥajjāj's authority. He was the second to be executed after Al-Ḥajjāj had recited to him the poem he had composed against him[3].

Next came Fairūz Ḥusain a rich Persian whom Al-Ḥajjāj called "The Prince of the rebels". "Give me in writing the details of your wealth", asked Al-Ḥajjāj. "And after that", asked the rich Persian boldly. "First write what I ask"; "then you will spare my life". "Write first, then I will see". "Servants" said Fairūz, "write ! One million, two millions ...". And then he enumerated considerable figures of wealh. "Where is all this money"? asked Al-Ḥajjāj. "With me", said Fairūz. "Then, you are going to give it to me". "And I will have my life saved on this condition"? "I swear", replied Al-Ḥajjāj, "that you deposit the money immediately and after that I shall have you killed". "I swear", replied Fairūz "that you shall not have my money and my

1. Tabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1106 and 1110.
2. Tabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1111 and 1121.
3. Tabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1113.
'Aghānī', Vol. V, P. 160.

blood at the same time" ! Al-Ḥajjāj had him put in prison[1].

Then appeared Muḥammed ibn Sa'd, ibn Abi-Waqqās, one of the chiefs of the rebels. "O you, the most strayed and the most arrogant of men" ! And Al-Ḥajjāj reproached him and struck him on the head. "You are the ruler", said the accused, "Be merciful ! *If you had judged it appropriate to seek the advice of the Prince* of the Believers on that what concerns us, you would have shared the honour and glory of pardon, if he granted it; if, on the contrary, he had pronounced the sentence of death, you would be excusable" ! Al-Ḥajjāj who bent his head for a moment said, "Cut his neck". And the order was executed[2].

It was then the turn of a young man, Ibn 'Ubaid ibn 'Abdur Raḥmān whose father was equally one of the rebel chiefs. "May God protect the Amīr" ! said the captive, "I am not guilty ; I was only a child without independence, who followed his father and mother where they went". "Was your mother with your father during all these revolts" ? "Yes". "May God curse your father" ! shouted Al-Ḥajjāj. And he sent away Ibn 'Ubaid[3].

Then they brought before Al-Ḥajjāj a chief called "Abdullāh ibn 'Āmir. "O Al-Ḥajjāj", he shouted "May your eyes never see paradise if I accuse Yazid ibn al-Muhallab wrongly" ! "What has he done" ? asked Al-Ḥajjāj. And the accused recited this verse in reply. "He has used the ruse to deliver his own relation but he has conducted to you, in the pillory reserved for his own people, the race of Muḍar. While delivering your tribe, he has preserved his clan from the moral destiny, because your tribe, in his mind, is inferior in nobility". Al-Ḥajjāj found his accusation very grave, but after a little reflection, he said "Does this concern you" ? And addressing the guards he said, "Cut his neck"[4]. 'Abdullāh was executed. But Al-Ḥajjāj never forgot the two small verses that he had heard.

The Persian Fairūz, whose execution had been postponed, reappeared for the second time and was put to torture. Fairūz fearing his end to be very near and desiring to fulfil his oath said

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1120.
   Mubarrad, P. 656.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 390.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1120.
   Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 656.
3. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1121.
4. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1122.

to Al-Ḥajjāj, "The people are convinced that I am already dead; however, the money I have deposited with them, will never be returned to you but only if you let me appear before them to show that I am still alive and to demand from them the repayment of my money that they owe me". On hearing these words, Al-Ḥajjāj permitted Fairūz to appear before the people. The rich Persian was conducted to the gate of the city, where he said; "To those who do not know me, I declare that I am Fairūz Ḥuṣain. Many of you have my money which is my property. I donate it to all and permit you to dispose it as it pleases you. Let no body pay a dirhem of it and let the people present here announce my decision to the absentees". Al-Ḥajjāj cut his head[1].

Ayyūb ibn Zaid ibn Qais, whom the chroniclers simply name Ibn al-Qirriyya and who was an orator of no mean repute, was the next the victim of the vengeance of Al-Ḥajjāj. After the battle of Dair al-Jamājim, this orator had remained at Kūfa, where he still had free access to the house of the prefect of the city. "Look at this man who stays near me", said the officer of Al-Ḥajjāj. "When tomorrow or day after tomorrow the Amīr will send me a letter, enclosing the orders, I cannot but implement". The frightful letter actually arrived. "You have become a haunt which serves a refuge to the hypocrites among the inhabitants of 'Irāq", wrote Al-Ḥajjāj "When you have seen this letter, send Ibn al-Qirriyya with hands tied to the neck, under the guard of a man chosen from your men". The perfect threw this letter to Ibn al-Qirriyya, who was there. "At your orders", said the old rebel. He was then tied and taken to the terrible Amīr, who asked him, "What discourse have you prepared for this occassion"? "May God protect the Amīr! three words which are like a troop of horsemen at rest: present life, future life, mercy". And he pronounced the most beautiful discourse on the subject. Al-Ḥajjāj admired the eloquence of this man and had his head cut off. Then, when he saw his body stretched on the earth, bathed in blood, he had an egoistic regret; "Oh that we had spared him for the pleasure of still hearing his words[2]! The death of this orator is placed by Ṭabarī in the year 84 A.H. (703 A.D.).

Al-Ḥajjāj did not limit his reprisals, says Balādhurī, to particular

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1122.
Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 656.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1128.

cases; he condemned them in masses. He sent to Baṣra the families of a great number of rebels and enclosed them in a castle which served as a prison. This castle was called for this purpose, "Castle of the Despatched"[1]. The 'mawālīs', who had formed a solid opposition to him together with the warriors and the readers of the Qur'ān, suffered no less a better fate. Al-Ḥajjāj said to them: "You are miserable strangers and barbarians and it is better that you stay in your villages". "Then he ordered them to return to their villages and in order to see that they remained where they were settled, he had the name of the village branded on their hand.

Informed of these persecutions, the Caliph 'Abdul Malik wrote to Al-Ḥajjāj, "The Prince of the Believers has learnt that you have shed waves of blood and squandered the treasure[2]. These are the two crimes that the Prince of the Believers cannot tolerate being committed by any person. The Prince orders you two things: moderation and vigour; he likes only obedience and abhors rebellion. At least, be convinced that the Prince of the Believers cannot accept a fault on your part. If God submits a nation to you, do not kill the people or commit crime or make them prisoners". The Caliph added a few verses proclaming that he was "The only master", and warned Al-Ḥajjāj "from transgressing his orders, otherwise tears would appear"[3].

Al-Ḥajjāj addressed to the Caliph the following reply, "I have received the letter in which the Prince of the Believers has accused me of shedding much blood and squandering the booty. In fact I have not by punishing the rebels attained the measures of punishment which they deserved. I have only given to the faithful subjects the rewards which they deserved. However, if in killing these rebels I have been wasteful; if in rewarding these obedient subjects, I have surpassed my duties, the Prince of the Believers may pardon me for the past and draw for me a limit, which I shall never trespass, if it pleases God. To God alone belongs power. In fact, I am not susceptible to penalty or pain of offence, for the people have been victims of an error which either merits

1. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 355.
2. This was the hint to the huge amount of money Al-Ḥajjāj spent on the construction of Wāsiṭ and the huge amount Al-Ḥajjāj spent by way of rewarding the services of the good soldiers.
3. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, Pp. 141-142.

ransom or of premeditated violence which draws reprisals. It is in your name I have rewarded; it is in your good that I have condemned. Of the two orders that you have addressed to me, the sweetest for me is a favour, the most rigid is a pain to my eyes; I am ready to execute the one with mildness and support the other with resignation". At the foot of his letter Al-Ḥajjāj added these verse :—

إذا أنا لم أتبع رضاك وأتقي   أذاك فيومي لا تزول كواكبه

وما لامرئ بعد الخليفة جُنّة   تقيه من الأمر الذي هو كاسبه

أسالم من سالمت من ذي قرابة   ومن لم تسالمه فإني محاربه

إذا قارف الحجاج منك خطيئة   فقامت عليه في الصباح نوادبه

اذا أنا لم أدن الشفيق لنصحه   وأقصى الذي تسري إليّ عقاربه

فمن ذا الذي يرجو نوالي ويتقي   مصاولتي والدهر جم نوائبه

فقف بي على حد الرضا لا أجوزه   مدى الدهر حتى يرجع الدر حالبه

وإلا فدعني والأمور فإنني   شفيق رفيق أحكمتني تجاربه

"If I do not seek your satisfaction, if I do not fear your dissatisfaction, let all my days be exposed to misfortune. But for the Caliph, where can I find asylum for the expiation of the faults committed?
I shall grant peace to the faithful followers to whom you have granted it.
I shall withhold it to whom you have refused I shall fight them.
If Al-Ḥajjāj has committed any fault in your eyes, let the crying women be around him tomorrow morning!
If I do not attract to myself the generous friend who advised me,
If I do not punish the enemy who turns his sword against me,
Who would then hope for my goodness? Or who would fear my severity, when the events precipitate themselves in crowd? Place me within the limits of your favour and I shall not come out of it any more, so that the milk (favour) may come back to the donor (milker). Then let me act for I am a faithful and devoted servant, whom experience has made wise".

These verses, adds Mas'ūdī, are the best that we have from

Al-Ḥajjāj. When 'Abdul Malik received this letter, he shouted, "Abū Muḥammed (The Christian name of Al-Ḥajjāj) fears my anger and never exposes himself to the reproaches that he detests"[1]. Evidently Al-Hajjāj, he knew, had routed the rebels and most effectively scattered the opposition to him.

The Death of 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn Muḥammed Ibn al-Ash'ath and End of the Expedition against Rutabīl

After the sad desertion of his followers and party factions that divided his camp, as already narrated, 'Abdur Raḥmān had returned to the court of Rutabīl. But the existence of the chief rebel had always troubled the mind of Al-Ḥajjāj. He sent letters after letters to obtain his surrender. "Send him to me", wrote he to the king of Kābūl, "otherwise, by God! I will tread the earth of your kingdom, with an army of one million men"[2].

Rutabīl was not willing to violate his treaty with 'Abdur Raḥmān but the terror of Al-Ḥajjāj compelled him to enter into a stipulation with him. Rutabīl was exempted from tribute and there was to be no incursion for seven years, at the end of which period he would annually pay in kind, a sum of 900,000 dirhems. Under these conditions Rutabīl accepted to deliver his host, 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn Muḥammed ibn al-Ash'ath[3].

Rutabīl then siezed his host and his brother Al-Qāsim. He chained them together with iron by their neck. The were conducted with several persons of their family to the nearest post on the Arab frontier. But 'Abdur Raḥmān had resolved to save himself from the hands of his enemy. Reaching Ar-Rukhkhaj, which was still a town in the kingdom of Kābūl, he threw himself from the height of a castle, dragging with him the guard who was with him and killed himself. The members of his family were decapitated and their heads with that of 'Abdur Raḥmān were carried to the Viceroy of 'Irāq in 85 A.H. (704 A.D.).

Al-Ḥajjāj had the head of 'Abdur Raḥmān exhibited in all his provinces and then sent it to the caliph 'Abdul Malik. The latter after a little thought, sent it to his brother 'Abdul 'Azīz,

1. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, Pp. 141-142.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1133.
3. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 400.
   Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1133-1135.

Governor of Egypt, where it was still shown around from city to city and finally buried. His head lay in Egypt and his body in Ar-Rukhkhaj[1].

Al-Ḥajjāj had triumphed over an inveterate enemy, whose better fortune would have altered his prospects and probably ended the Umayyad rule in 'Irāq. The mechanism of the inhabitants of 'Irāq had failed and the people of 'Irāq recognised that it was impossible to separate Al-Ḥajjāj from 'Abdul Malik.

Al-Ḥajjāj and the Extension of the Fronties of the Empire towards the East

The revolt of 'Abdur Rahmān was the last trouble Al-Ḥajjāj had to subdue before he was assured internal peace in the province. Hencefourth, as virtual Viceroy of the eastern part of the Caliphate, he fortified his frontiers and extended the boundaries of the Empire towards the east. He did not accomplish this remarkable political feat by himself but the measures he took in this respect were in no way, less helpful. The armies that he sent to these far off regions, and the advice that he offered to the generals selected by him from time to time, went a long way in making the enterprise, a successful accomplishment.

Al-Hajjāj and the Extension of the Empire under 'Abdul Malik

The most troubled spot to the Umayyads ever since Caliph Mu'āwiyah's reign had been the Turks around the frontiers of Khurāsān. A group of small states without any central authority shared among themselves the vast plains on the banks of the river Oxus. When some of them consented to pay tribute to the Arabs, the others refused; the Muslim domination over this area was, therefore, intermittent and poorly assured and as a result, wars were continuous there: wars against the Turks who tried to recover their independence, wars against the Arabs, caused by the personal rivalries or by the old rancours of the tribes[2].

Al-Ḥajjāj had appointed Al-Muhallab, Governor of Khurāsān in 79 A.H. (698 A.D.) and as Governor he had preserved the

1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 154.
   'Aghānī', Vol. II, P. 140 and Vol. X, P. 65.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 832, 859 and 1022.

loyalty of the province to the Caliph of Damascus, during the formidable rebellion of 'Abur Rahmān ibn Muhammed ibn al-Ash'ath. But the steps he took to subdue the Turks in the principalities around, were not very strategic so as to ensure a speedy victory over them.

In the year 80 A. H. while his son Yazīd was subduing As-Sabal, king of Al-Khuttal, in Transoxiana, Al-Muhallab blockaded the powerful fortress of Kiss. But surrounded by the enemies, he was forced to withdraw in order to subdue the rivalries which broke out in his army[1]. He also learnt of the sad demise of his son Al-Mughīrah, whom he had left as lieutenant at Marw, capital of Khurāsān. The old general wept like a mother over the death of this beloved son. He received a letter of condolence from Al-Ḥajjāj. This happened in the year 82 A.H. (701 A.D.). The siege of Kiss had lasted two years. A treaty was concluded and the besieged agreed to pay a ransom to Al-Muhallab and he withdrew[2].

On his route to Marw, Al-Muhallab released the warriors of Muḍar, who had aroused his suspicions and for this purpose, he had chained them. "If you were right in putting them in prison", wrote the Viceroy, from whom nothing escaped, "You are wrong in freeing them ; if on the contrary, you are right in setting them at liberty, you committed injustice, in throwing them in prison". Al-Muhallab replied, "They inspired me with fear and so I put them in prison ; when I was in security, I set them at liberty[3].

Al-Muhallab did not have the fortune of returning to his capital. He died at Zāghūl, a village in Khurāsān, in the month of Dhū'l hijja in 82 A.H. (January 702 A.D.). This brave general had rendered meritorious service to Islām.

Al-Muhallab while dying had appointed his son Yazīd to succeed him. Al-Ḥajjāj confirmed the choice. Yazīd repulsed the rebel forces of 'Abdur Rahmān ibn al-'Abbās in the neighbourhood of Herāt. After this expedition, Yazīd conquered the imposing citadel of Bādhagīs in 82 A.H. (703 A.D.).[4]

Yazīd's relations with Al-Ḥajjāj did not remain satisfactory. Ṭabarī gives the following account in support. On his return from

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1041-1042.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1077.
3. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1041-1042.
4. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1129 and 1131.

a visit to the court of Damascus in 84 A.H. (703 A.D.), Al-Ḥajjāj met an old monk in a convent. "Do you know me"? asked Al-Ḥajjāj of the monk, who was well versed in the knowledge of books "Yes, I have been told about you", replied the monk. "Do you know which countries I govern"? "Yes". "Do you know who will rule after me"? asked the Viceroy "A certain Yazīd". "During my life or after me". "I ignore it", said the monk. "Could you describe this man to me", asked Al-Ḥajjāj. "He is plotting a treason. I do not know anything more"[1]. Ṭabarī reports that this prospective prophecy of the old scholar left the Viceroy so scared that he marched uninterrupted for seven days and on reaching his castle wrote a letter to the Caliph 'Abdul Malik requesting him to accept his resignation. "O son of the mother of Al-Ḥajjāj"! replied the Caliph, "I know your mind. You like to know what I think about you By my life! I see, that there is a place for Nāfi' ibn 'Alqama: but do not think any more of your resignation, until God brings to us what He has reserved for us"[2].

This reply did not calm the uneasy mind of the Viceroy, who fearing a treason, continually revived in his mind all the Yazīds of the epoch and stopped finally at the young Governor of Khurāsān, who was the most popular, the richest and the most valiant of the Yazīds. Al-Ḥajjāj's suspicions, we have seen, had been stirred when the young Governor had spared some of the rebels who had fought under 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn al-Ash'ath, because they belonged to the race of the Yemenites. The visit of an old horseman of Al-Muhallab confirmed Al-Ḥajjāj in his apprehensions about Yazīd. "Tell me about Yazīd", asked Al-Ḥajjāj. The old horseman, whose name was Al-Khiyār ibn Sabrah, said, "He is obedient and peaceful". "You are telling a lie. Tell me the truth", asked the unconvinced Viceroy. "By God! he is great and powerful. I declare that Yazīd has saddled his horse and will never bridle it", replied the frightened soldier. "It is true", said Al-Ḥajjāj. The Viceroy later on rewarded the old horseman and appointed him the Governor of 'Umān[3]. This anecdote is equally supported by Aghānī[4] and ibn Khallikān[5].

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol II, P. 1138.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1139.
3. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1140 and 1143.
4. 'Aghānī', Vol XI, P. 170.
5. Ibn Khallikān, 'Wafayāt', Vol. II, P. 398.

After the fall of Ibn al-Ash'ath, Yazīd ibn al-Muhallab was the only dominant influence that reared its head against the powerful Viceroy. The latter had reasons to suspect this young Governor. He had exercised clemency towards the captives of 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn al-Ash'ath. He had also deferred the order of the Viceroy to expel the rebel Qaisites who had settled in Tirmidh near Mūsā ibn 'Abdullāh, considering that as long as they were dangerous, Al-Ḥajjāj would let him alone and not replace him by a Qaisite. The son of Yūsuf invited Yazīd to 'Irāq repeatedly and every time the young Governor represented to his superior the perpetual threats of the Turks and the need to pursue hostility regularly and thus remained in his far away province[1].

Tired of his evasions, Al-Ḥajjāj ordered Yazīd to invade Kharizm i.e. the strip of land which extends along the banks of the Oxus between the old city of Āmul and the Aral sea. But Yazīd who had begun to feel afraid of Al-Ḥajjāj replied, "This country contains little booty, O Amīr and it produces ferocious dogs"! "Leave there a lieutenant". wrote Al-Ḥajjāj, "and come here" ('Irāq). Fearing the terror of Al-Ḥajjāj, Yazīd replied, "I want to make an incursion on Khārizm". "Don't do anything", replied Al-Ḥajjāj "Because you have said, Khārizm is an unprofitable area". Yazīd who could tolerate neither the orders nor the offence of Al-Ḥajjāj, led an expedition to Khārizm. His men suffered disaster and most of them perished in the cold[2].

Al-Ḥajjāj wrote to the Caliph a letter in which he blamed Yazīd and the family of Al-Muhallab for their old attachment to the party of 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair[3]. "I do not consider the submission of Al-Muhallab to the family of Az-Zubair as an act of dishonour", replied the Caliph. "On the contrary", he continued, "I look upon it as a debt. The family of Al-Muhallab has equally contracted this debt towards me. It is a pledge of its faithfulness". But Al-Ḥajjāj, who had already decided to secure his end, persisted in his purpose. He blamed Yazīd for his persistent disobedience and apprised the Caliph of the possibility of rebellion and treason from the son of Al-Muhallab. The Caliph tired, dismissed Yazīd in 85 A.H. (704 A.D.). Al-Mufaḍḍal, Yazīd's

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1143.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1143.
3. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1140-1143.

brother, was appointed Governor of Khurāsān[1].

Al-Mufaḍḍal remained Governor of Khurāsān for nine months. During this period he continued the raids on his northern frontier. His most important conquest was Tirmidh, a fortified place on the Oxus and the neighbouring region. The place was governed by an adventurer Mūsā ibn 'Abdullāh, who had acquired it by a happy coup before the death of Ibn az-Zubair and reigned there ever since. Mūsā ibn 'Abdullāh was killed and Tirmidh conquered in 85 A. H. (704 A. D.). Tirmidh opened its gates to the victors and Al-Mufaḍḍal hastened to Al-Ḥajjāj ths result of the happy campaign ! "It is astonishing, the son of Bahla"! said Al-Ḥajjāj, surprised at this achievement, "When I ordered him to kill Ibn Samura[2] (a Yemenite) he replied that he had given him asylum, and now he informs me that he has just killed Mūsā ibn 'Abdullāh ibn Khāzim of the tribe of Qais"[3] !

Caliph 'Abdul Malik died on the 15th of the month of Shawwāl in the year 86 A.H. (8th October 705 A.D.) and was succeeded by his son Al-Walīd. Caliph Al-Walīd retained Al-Ḥajjāj as Viceroy of the Eastern Caliphate and Al-Ḥajjāj continued to extend the frontiers of the Umayyad Empire, in the east with ever more vigour and gusto. It was under the new Caliph that the Umayyad rule reached its glory and that Al-Ḥajjāj reaped the full benefits of his hard labour. At his request Al-Walīd dismissed Al-Mufaḍḍal ibn al-Muhallab and appointed Qutaiba ibn Muslim as Governor of Khurāsān in 86 A.H. (705 A.D.). Al-Ḥajjāj put in prison, the same year, Yazīd ibn al-Muhallab and dismissed his two brothers Ḥabīb, Governor of Kirmān and 'Abdul Malik, commander of his own guard. It was the complete fall of the family of Al-Muhallab[4].

Al-Ḥajjāj ordered Qutaiba to continue the fight against the Turks and instructed him "to take them by guile add let them die". Qutaiba followed the advice so well, that throughout his military career, he was never stopped by a scruple and tactfully betrayed his enemies[5].

Qutaiba ibn Muslim crossed the river Oxus in the year

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1141, 1143 and 1144.
2. One of the Chiefs of the revolt of 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn al-Ash'ath.
3. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1164.
4. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1182.
5. Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. V, P. 12.

86 A.H. (705 A.D.). The King of Aṣ-Ṣaghāniyān soon brought to him presents and the golden key; several rebels of Ṭukhāristān equally agreed to pay ransom. Satisfied with these happy beginnings, Qutaiba turned to Marw leaving to his brother Ṣāliḥ ibn Muslim the charge of the army. He soon received from Al-Ḥajjāj this note, "During the raids, command the vanguard, on return remain at the rear-guard with the laggards"[1]. Al-Ḥajjāj's own experiences guided the general in his expeditions.

The campaign in the following year 87 A.H. was directed against Baikand, a rich commercial mart beyond the Oxus[2]. The Turks of Sughdiana and their allies, who had joined with them for the defence of the town, cut off the communications of Qutaiba. For two months Al-Ḥajjāj had no news of the expedition; he prescribed public prayers not only in Wāsiṭ but in all the mosques of the provinces[3]. At last Qutaiba was victorious and the inhabitants capitulated.

In 88 A.H. (707 A.D.) Qutaiba ibn Muslim led the first expedition against the kingdom of Bukhārā but till the following year Qutaiba dispaïred to occupy it. Al-Ḥajjāj was very dissatisfied at the failure and he addressed a message of reproach to his general and asked him for the plan of the city of Bukhārā. Then having received it and examined it, he gave to Quitaba instructions based on the plan of the works of defence[4]. The Governor of Khurāsān resumed the campaign for the third time, in the year 90 A.H. (709 A.D.). He carried out the orders of Al-Ḥajjāj vigorously and after a bitter fight put the enemy to rout. Bukhārā was taken[5].

Inspite of the instructions of the Viceroy, Qutaiba returned to Marw, with his army. When he arrived in this town, he wrote to Al-Ḥajjāj that the conquest of Bukhārā was the work of his brother, Abdur Raḥmān ibn Muslim, whom he had sent at the head of the 'Arabs. But a freed slave, who was present at the capture of Bukhārā, told Al-Ḥajjāj the truth. The son of Yūsuf was struck with a terrific anger. He received with angry shouts

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1181.
2. Yāqūt, 'Mu'jam', Vol. I, P. 797.
3. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 420.
   Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1186.
4. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1198-1199.
5. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1198-1199.

a delegation of Tamīmites sent by Qutaiba to speak in his favour and ordered for a barber. When this man entered with his scissors in hand, "Do you know", said the Viceroy to the messenger, "What I am going to do? I am going to cut your tongue, if you refuse to tell the truth". The Tamīmites ended by declaring that this conquest was the work of Qutaiba, the commander and his brother deputed by him. Al-Ḥajjāj's temper cooled down[1]. Al-Ḥajjāj could not withstand family favours where truth was concerned.

Qutaiba's treatment of the Turkish Prince Nīzak, ruler of Bādhaghīs[2] and Minister of the King of Ṭukhāristān[3], blurred the fair name of the valiant general and conqueror. Nīzak had been first an ally of Qutaiba[4] but seized with remorse at the spectacle of cruelty on his compatriots, he fled and from the heights of the defiles of Khulm, called upon his people to rally around him, in order to drive away the enemy. In the spring of 91 A.H. (710 A.D.), Qutaiba captured Nīzak by ruse and then put him in prison. On receiving the permission of Al-Ḥajjāj, Nīzak was beheaded with 700 of his campanions ; his body was suspended and his head was sent to Al-Ḥajjāj in 91 A.H. (710 A.D.)[5]. Al-Ḥajjāj felicitated himself for having chosen such a general "I sent Qutaiba young in experience", said he, "but every time I lifted him à cubit, (length of arm from the elbow to the middle of tip of the middle finger) he has raised me a fathom (to a man's size)"[6].

On his return from Ṭukhāristān, Qutaiba destroyed the fortress of Shūmān, finally subjugated Kiss and Nasaf, burnt the town of Firyāb, which was called since then "The Burnt". At last laden with the booty of Sughdiana, he returned to Marw passing by Bukhārā and Āmul[7].

The following year 92 A.H. (711 A.D.) Qutabia ibn Muslim was also appointed Governor of Sijistān. He marched againt Rutabīl, but the latter promised to pay the tribute, he had stipulated with Al-Ḥajjāj according to the treaty made with him seven years earlier[8]. Soon after the conquest of Khārizm, Qutaiba advanced

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1203-1204.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1184.
3. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1205.
4. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol II, P. 1195.
5 Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1121-1223.
6 Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1225.
7. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp 1228-1230.
8. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1235.

quickly towards the big and rich city of Samarqand, capital of Sughdiana and which was the Queen of Transoxiana. Qutaiba laid siege to the capital. The besieged defended their city courageously but it was only after a bitter resistance that Qutaiba succeeded in his assault[1]. Qutaiba entered the city with shouts of 'Allah Akbar'. It was in 93 A.H. (712 A.D.).

The grand daughter of Yazdajird, the last Persian King, was taken prisoner in Samarqand and sent by Qutaiba to Al-Ḥajjāj, who presented her to Al-Walīd. The latter admitted her in his royal harem and had from her a son called Yazīd ibn al-Walīd[2].

The conquest of Sindh by the Arabs is also due to the initiative of Al-Ḥajjāj. Like Qutaiba ibn Muslim, who waged great wars in Transoxiana, Muḥammed ibn al-Qāsim ibn Abī-'Aqīl, the Thaqīfite cousin of Al-Ḥajjāj and Governor of Makrān, was the first great Arab conqueror who brought war into India. Ṭabarī[3] places his appointment in the year 90 A.H. (709 A.D.). Baladhurī[4] attributes the following cause to this war: The king of "the Isle of Hyacinth", which is no other than the Island of Ceylon (Where Muslim traders were settled till this time for trade) sent to Al-Ḥajjāj during the Government of Muḥammed ibn al-Qāsim the Thaqīfite, some Arab women whose relations were dead and who *found themselves abandoned. The prince hoped to gain* the friendship of the powerful ruler of 'Irāq. But a band of pirates of Daibul, belonging to the Indian tribes of the Maids, took possession of the vessel, which was carrying the strangers and reduced them to the position of slaves. "O Al-Ḥajjāj"! cried one of them at the moment, when she was falling into the hands of the pirates of the sea. The Viceroy learning that one of these women had called him to her help cried out in return, "Here I am"! And rescued the women.

At this time the most powerful prince of the valley of Sindh or the Indus, was Dāhir. The Viceroy of 'Irāq then sent a message

1. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 421.
   Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1242-1245.
2. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 1246-1247.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. III, P. 93.
   Ibn Khallikān, 'Wafayāt', Vol. I, P. 455.
3. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1200.
4. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 435.

to Dāhir demanding the liberty of Arab captives. "I have no authority over the pirates, who have taken them", wrote Dāhir. Al-Ḥajjāj then sent Muḥammed ibn al-Qāsim against Daibul.

The Viceroy of 'Irāq put under the command of this general an army in which there were 6,000 Syrians. He supplied it with all sorts of equipments "even with thread and needle". Balādhurī adds other curious details about the material supplied to these soldiers in order to show with what care Al-Ḥajjāj equipped his troops. He soaked well washed cotton in better vinegar, then, having left the cotton to dry under shade, he handed it over to the soldiers who were leaving, saying to them, "When you arrive in Sindh, if you cannot get vinegar, boil your food and cook your stew and prepare a meal of vegetable fish with water in which you will have soaked this cotton"[1].

Muhammed ibn al-Qāsim left 'Irāq for India by land. When he arrived before Daibul, vessels came from the Persian gulf, which brought him arms, ammunitions and machines for the siege. Among these engines, they observed 'al-'Arous', a giant catapult, equal to the force of 500 men. Muḥammed and Al-Ḥajjāj were writing all the three days. The conqueror apprised the Viceroy of all the developments of war and received from him his advice on the manner of directing the operations. "Dress 'al-'Arous", wrote one day Al-Ḥajjāj to his general, "and shorten its one leg. Place the machine on the eastern side; then call the man incharge to handle it and order him to aim at the mast, whose description you have given". The mast of which Al-Ḥajjāj speaks here was the trunk of a huge palm which fluttered above the city as a palladium; it was hit and shattered. The general followed the instructions of the Amīr and took the city by assault within three days. Then leaving a garrison of 4,000 men at Daibul, he went to take possession of another city called Al-Bīrūn, whose terror-stricken inhabitants had already requested Al-Ḥajjāj for peace[2].

Muhammed went up the course of the Indus. He crossed Mahrān in a bridge of boats and offered the battle to Dāhir, who mistook the invaders and affected to ignore their presence. This presumption ruined him. Mounted on his elephant and escorted by the princes and vassals who were mounted on similar elephants, Dāhir fought bravely but was killed in the evening in the battle, in

1. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 436.
2. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', Pp. 437-438.

90 A.H. (708 A.D.). After his victory Muḥammed ibn al-Qāsim occupied the city of Rāwar, where the women of Dāhir were enclosed. These princesses, true to the traditions of their country, preferred death to dishonour; they set fire to their palace and perished in the flames with all their treasures. Then, the conquerors attacked the ancient city of Brahmanābadh situated two 'farasakhs' from the marshes where the famous Arab town of Manṣūrah rose soon after. The place was taken by assault after a battle and delivered to pillage. Brahmanābadh was only a heap of ruins at the time when Balādhurī wrote[1].

Ar-Rūr, a commercial district on the borders of the river Mahrān and the sea, did not have the fate of the cities taken by assault. Muḥammed next crossed the Bīas and appeared before the opulant city of Multān which he invaded. This city in the north was, the extreme point of the conquest of Muḥammed ibn al-Qāsim. In the east, he reached the borders of the basin of the Indus. Al-Ḥajjāj always expressed his satisfaction at such splendid acievements. On examining his accounts, his revenues and expenses, he found that his expedition had cost him 60,000,000 dirhems and brought him in return 120,000,000 dirhems. "We have allayed our anger", said he, "We have avenged ourselves, and there remains with us a gain of 60,000,000 dirhems plus the head of Dahīr[2]".

Along with these treasures, the conquerer sent to Al-Hajjāj native troops from Sindh: 'Zuṭṭ', 'Sayābija' and others, accompanied by their wives, their children and their herds of cattle[3]. Al-Hajjāj established a band of these "Zuṭṭ of Sindh", that his cousin had sent him, on the territory of Kaskar, a lowland plain, marshy and covered with bushes, where their cattle could graze freely[4]. Al-Hajjāj gave part of the presents from the conqueror of Sindh to Caliph Al-Walīd. He sent to the Caliph a large number of 'Zuṭṭs' with 4,000 buffaloes[5].

Thanks to the energy of Al-Hajjāj who maintained the internal peace of the country and sent out vast hordes of troops to the distant areas to bring them under the rule of Damascus. The conquest of Transoxiana and Sindh was due to the far reaching

1. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 438.
2. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 440.
3. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', Pp. 162, 375 and 376.
4. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 375.
5. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', Pp. 162, 167 and 168.

sagacity of the Viceroy of 'Iraq who diverted the turbulent and incessantly burstful passions of the Arabs to the splendours of the conquests beyond their own frontiers. This political move helped the son of Yūsuf to keep them away from him and to make his Caliph the most fortunate of all the rulers of his dynasty. His contribution to the Arab conquest, which reached its apogee during the reign of Al-Walid I was splendid and remarkable.

VI

AL-ḤAJJĀJ AS ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMER

Guided by the interests of the state and the economic prosperity of the province, Al-Ḥajjāj aimed at establishing a highly centralised machinery in 'Irāq and the neighbouring provinces under his control. As Governor of 'Irāq and Viceroy of the Eastern Caliphate, he introduced a number of administrative reforms to effect this change. His achievements in this respect were epoch-making

The situation on the arrival of Al-Ḥajjāj in 'Iıāq in 75 A.H presented many difficulties The administration of the province under Bishr ibn Marwan was unstable and resurged with nomad anarchism and indiscipline Bishr, in fact, did not possess many of the qualifying virtues of his brother and the Caliph 'Abdul Malik had, therefore, to remind him that it was his foremost duty to preserve the political integrity of the province[1], threatened by the Khārijites on the one hand and internal indiscipline on the other. But Bishr in his administrative ability lacked the initiative and energy required to cope with the situation. His death induced the Caliph to hand over the administration of the province to a strong man like Al-Ḥajjāj, whose very name invoked terror in hearts of his enemies.

Al-Ḥajjāj arrived in 'Irāq with a number of difficulties facing him. But without losing spirits, he set immediately to his work. While on the political level he defeated and discredited the opposition of the Khārijites, established discipline in the army and expanded the frontiers of the empire, he worked at home at establishing a highly centralised administrative machinery, with himself as the fountain-head of all control under the Caliph.

As Viceroy of the Eastern Caliphate, Al-Ḥajjāj appointed the governors of the eastern provinces, i.e. Fāris, Kirmān Makrān, Sindh, Sijistān, Khurāsān and Umān and recommended their dismissal to the Caliph, if he considered them unfit for the high dignity or if they failed to comply with his instructions. Al-Ḥajjāj

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 855.

had the internal administration of the province equally under his control and appointed and dismissed the administrative officials himself, right from the chief Shurta of the police to the Finance Secretary, who maintained the Fiscal Register. On his arrival in 'Irāq, Al-Hajjāj appointed 'Abdur Rahmān ibn 'Ubaid, the Tamīmite, as the Commissioner of Police for Kūfa and Basra[1], Abū Burdah ibn Abī-Mūsā al-Ash'arī was appointed the Qādī of Kūfa in 79 A.H. in place of Shuraih ibn-al Hārith[2]. Zādān Farrūkh ibn Bīra was his Financial Secretary[3]. Al-Hajjāj equally appointed and dismissed military generals at his discretion. As administrative head Al-Hajjāj aimed at an efficient, honest and regular administrative machinary. He expected from his subordinates integrity, conscientiousness and filial obedience. He looked in them for personal skill, honesty and functional excellence. Procrastination, hesitation and insincerity were strictly punishable by him. Honest men were happy under Al-Hajjāj while the easy going had no place with him. In order to strengthen the national unity of the Muslim State effected so far by the defeat of hostile and rebellious forces within the country, Al-Hajjāj introduced several administrative reforms, with a view to increase the central revenues of the state, improve the agricultural prosperity of the country, create a purely Arabic coinage system, regulate weight and measures and effect a correct reading of the holy Qur'ān. His administrative regulations in matters of coinage, weights measures and taxes were epoch-making. His achievements in this respect bore far-reaching results, for many of the measures introduced by him were either retained or revoked time and again after him and in many cases, long after his death. Al-Hajjāj determined the politics of his country—it was only a question of for or against him[1].

REFORMS

Currency Reforms

Al-Hajjāj's contribution in the creation of an Arabic coinage system in 76 A.H. (695 A.D.) was of considerable significance.

1. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. III, P. 9.
2. Tabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 940.
3. Balādhurī, 'Futūh', P. 300.
4. J. Wellhousen—Arab Kingdom and its fall, P. 254.

In the pre-Islamic days, the Arabs were using Persian and Roman coins in Mecca and Arabia. Prophet Muḥammed and his immediate successors made no change in the use of currency[1]. It was, however, Caliph 'Umar, who first initiated the policy of striking some silver coins bearing Qur'ānic superscriptions. For the rest foreign coins remained in circulation. Caliph Mu'āwiyah struck gold and silver coins but his money was not accepted because it bore no cross on it. Muṣ'ab ibn az-Zubair equally struck dirhems[2] bearing his brother 'Abdullāh's name and so did his brother, but all these native coins in circulation so far were of mixed nature. Except for the fact that they bore some holy inscriptions or Arabic legends, they could not drive out the foreign coins out of value, neither replace them for a number of reasons and, therefore, the Persian and Greek coins held a preponderant place in the Arab world. It was only under 'Abdul Malik that Arabic Money acquired confidence and began to be accepted for transaction and business. "It was only under the reign of 'Abdul Malik that Muslim coinage acquired importance and became worthy of confidence for revenue, for weight and touch". 'Abdul Malik struck at Damascus in 74 A.H. the first gold dīnārs which were purely Arabic[3].

The reason that compelled the Caliph to initiate this change is contained in a letter addressed by 'Abdul Malik to Emperor Justinian II, in which he confirmed the Islamic custom of mentioning the Prophet. The letter bore the date of Hijrī and began with the words, "Say: He is the only God". The Emperor was offended at this letter. He replied to the Caliph that if the affront was repeated, he, as a true Christian would inscribe insulting sentences on the imperial coins addressed to the pseudo-prophet and thus occasion ill-will towards the Caliphs' coreligionists. These threats deeply injured 'Abdul Malik, who on the advice of Khālid ibn Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiyah resolved to stop the circulation of the Roman coins and to strike money himself. Thereupon, he adopted a monetary system free of foreign inscriptions and coined golden and silver dirhems bearing religious legends[4].

1. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 466.
2. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', Pp. 466 and 468.
3. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 467.
   Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 939.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. VI, P. 337.
4. Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 337.

The reasons that compelled 'Abdul Malik to nationalise the coinage system were, we most remember, more political and religious than improvised ones. It was a part of the policy advocated by Caliph and 'Umar upheld by 'Abdul Malik, the policy of Arabicization of the State and nationalisation of the institutions of administration machinery. The establishment of the Arabic coinage was a natural consequences of the consolidation of the Empire, effected through the massive hand of Al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf. The political consciousness that dawned upon the countrymen in the wake of all these political upheavals, induced them to accept the change as sound and workable.

The first attempts at this great reform were made by Caliph 'Abdul Malik, who struck coins of gold (Dīnār) at Damascus in the year 74 A.H.[1]. Al-Ḥajjāj followed the orders of his master and began to issue silver dirhems at the end of the year 75 A.H.[2]. But the coins did not assume real importance before 75 A.H. (695 A.D.). Al-Ḥajjāj also struck silver dirhems of the Sassanid type, from the year 80 A.H. to 83 A.H. The Governor of 'Irāq had his name, "Al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf" engraved on them. They also bore sentences from the holy Qur'ān such as "He is the only God, the Eternal"[3], etc. The puritan Musalmāns considered this use of the verses from the holy book as an irreligious measure of Al-Ḥajjāj, because such currency on which these inscriptions were made could fall into the hands of the impious unbelievers. Anas ibn Mālik the old servant of the Prophet as well as the other pious believers never used this currency in their sales and purchases. They opposed, thus according to their power, the circulation of the new coins[4]. Their efferts proved, however, abortive. The coins of Al-Ḥajjāj, 'Abdul Malik and his successors and especially those of his son Hishām remained in great vogue. The money of Banū Umayyah was considered the best even by the 'Abbāssid Caliphs: Al-Manṣūr did not accept any other currency for the payment of the taxes[5].

1. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 467.
2. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', Pp. 466 and 468
3. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 939.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 337.
   Balādhurī, P. 468.
4. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. III, P. 22.
5. Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 337.

Al-Ḥajjāj confined the issue of his silver money to a jew called Sumair and that is why the money issued in Irāq was called "As-Sumairiyyah", money of sumair. Al-Ḥajjāj installed mints at Kūfa and later at Wāsiṭ where he appointed his engravers. And in order to prevent counterfeiting of money or escape, he not only placed his workers under strict supervision but also marked their hand with a seal[1]. He was not, however, the most terrible of the controllers. Under the rule of Hishām or of his successor Al-Walīd II, each of the 100 men then employed at the mint received 100 stripes for a default of a single grain (ḥabba=0 gr. 053), making thus, we are told, 10,000 stripes for a grain. It goes to the credit of Al-Ḥajjāj that his mintage was held to be the purest[2].

The change in the system of coinage introduced by 'Abdul Malik and perpetuated by his faithful servant Al-Ḥajjāj was, it is true, evolved gradually. The ancient system of coinage was not abandoned altogether for the Greek and Persian coins remained in circulation side by side with the Arabic. Nevertheless, a great national change had been introduced, which was sure to drive the other two out in the course of time. The change was effected slowly to avoid a great trouble of circulation but it was a great step forward, effected to bring a national revolution in the Arab life and culture.

The Change of the Language for Fiscal Administration

A second important step towards Arabicization and nationalisation of the state under 'Abdul Malik and Al-Walīd was the change of the language of administration from Greek to Arabic in Syria and from Persian to Arabic in 'Irāq and the Eastern Provinces. Arabic, the language of the Beduins was not considered rich for administrative purposes. The administrative personnels were also mostly non-Arabs, Greek in the West, Persians in the East and Copts in Egypt. Most of these administrative officials were non-Muslims. It was due to the intellectual genius of Al-Ḥajjāj that a great novel experiment was initiated to bring about administrative uniformity in the country. It was the translation of the register of Finance of Sawād and the rest of 'Irāq from Persian into Arabic. Balādhurī, gives the following account of the circumstances which

1. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 468.
2. Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kamil', Vol. IV, P. 337.

led Al-Ḥajjāj to effect this change. The secretary of the Governor in this section of the finance department was a Persian called Zādān Farrūkh ibn Bīra. The latter had for his assistant Ṣāliḥ ibn 'Abdur Raḥmān, freed slave of Banū Tamīn. Salih knew Arabic and Persian very well. He had the good fortune to be introduced to Al-Ḥajjāj through Zādān Furrūkh and was considered a capable person. "You have introduced me to the Amīr", said Ṣāliḥ to his benefactor, "and I see that he has found me acceptable, and I am sure that he will give me preference at your expense", said Ṣāliḥ, feeling a little elated at his meeting. "Don't imagine that", replied Zādān Farrūkh. "The Amīr needs me more than he needs you, because he has no other person except me to keep his account". "But, by God"! replied Ṣālih, "I could, if I liked to translate the account book into Arabic". "Translate then a line that I may see", said Zādān Farrūkh. Ṣālih did it and Zādān Farrūkh shouted, "But you are sick! You are sick"! And Zādān then instructed Ṣālih to feign sickness, to see whether he had really attracted Al-Ḥajjāj. Ṣālih did as he was directed and Al-Ḥajjāj on learning of his sickness, sent his own physician to Ṣālih. The Physician did not discover any symptom of mental illness and Zādān was obliged to take back his assistant.

In the wars connected with the revolt of 'Abdur Rahmān ibn Muḥammed ibn al-Ash'ath, Zādān Farrūkh was killed at Baṣra by a rebel soldier and in his place the Governor of 'Irāq took Ṣaliḥ as secretary or "Chief of the counting house"[1]. Then learning of the conversation which had taken place between Ṣālih and Zādān Farrūkh, Al-Ḥajjāj assigned Ṣāliḥ to translate the register of taxation into Arabic. The son of Zādān Farrūkh who was also employed in the ministry of finance then said to Ṣālih, "How will you translate 'dahwiya' and 'shashwiya'? "I will write 'ushr' wa niṣf 'ushr' (tenth and half-tenth)", "And how will you translate 'wīd'"? "I will write aidan for al-wīd, meaning excess, surplus". "Then may God exterminate thy race on the earth, O you, who has destroyed the Persian language from its roots"! shouted Mardānshāh. Dissatisfied and jealous, the Persian tried to bribe Ṣāliḥ: they offered him a sum of 100.000 dirhems so that he should declare himself incapable of executing the work and that it might

1. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 300
'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 252.

be given up. Ṣāliḥ refused their offers. And Al-Ḥajjāj having summoned him to account for the delay in the translation of the register of finances, soon had the satisfaction of reading it in Arabic. 'Abdul Ḥamid ibn Yaḥyā, the secretary of Marwān ibn Muḥammed used to say, "What a man Ṣāliḥ was and what services he has rendered to the secretaries"[1] ! Ṣāliḥ accomplished the work in 87 A.H. and earned the gratitude of his countrymen. But he met with a very tragic end under Yazīd II. The Dīwān of Syria was translated into Arabic by Sulaimān ibn Sa'd by the orders of 'Abdul Malik and the Dīwān of Egypt by Ibn Yarbu' al-Fazāri. Thus all the records of the Government were translated into Arabic and the language of Arabic became the medium of administration throughout the Muslim Empire. The change inspired national cohesion and solidarity. The step was part of a well-planned policy of Arabiciazation and effected to bring about a great national change in the life of the people. The credit of initiating the plan goes to Al-Ḥajjāj.

Revenue Administration and Agricultural Prosperity

The area between the Euphrates and the Tigris was at one time the most prosperous and the richest. But with the advance of the party politics and feuds into which the province had gradually plunged itself since the time of caliph 'Uthmān and the subsequent decay and disorder into which it fell, the agricultural prosperity of the province had been greatly reduced. Al-Ḥajjāj took practical steps to increase the revenues of the state. He gave equal care to agriculture. We know the name of one of the directors of Al-Ḥajjāj who was appointed in this branch of administration. He was 'Ubaid ibn Abī'l Mukhāriq. In an anecdote reported by Mas'ūdī, this person is represented as trembling, because he was afraid ; he had not satisfied Al-Ḥajjāj who was as severe to his civil employees as he was to the Amīrs of the army[2].

Al-Ḥajjāj used three important measures to bring about agricultural prosperity in the valleys of the Tigris, and the Euphrates and there by increased the state revenues.

1. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', Pp. 300-301.
2. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, P. 154.

Raising the Taxes

The subject people under the Muslim laws were obliged to pay a two-fold taxation-the Kharāj (half of the produce) to the state on the lands left to them for cultivation and the 'jizya' as a poll-tax. 'Jizya' was, in fact, a capitation tax. Those who embraced Islām were exempted from the poll-tax but they continued to pay the Kharāj to the public treasury. In order to escape from such obligations, the new converts left their fields and villages and settled in the cities and joined the wars of 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn al-Ash'ath under the name of 'maulā'. The desertion of these country people led to a two-fold loss to the state treasury. In the first instance, their mass conversions reduced considerably the state revenues. Secondly, the converts who joined the army received a state subsidy.

In order to make up the state loss, Al-Ḥajjāj compelled the new converts, to return to their villages to cultivate their lands and had their names sealed on their hand. They were also compelled to pay the Kharāj to the treasury as it was claimed from the non-Muslims. Al-Ḥajjāj also exacted 'jizya' from the new converts to Islām and there upon, Abdul Malik wrote to his brother 'Abdul-'Azīz ordering him to levy the same taxes in Egypt[1]. Al-Ḥajjāj's taxation policy caused considerable ill-will among the converts particularly the 'mawālī', who often made political game out of it, by joining Al-Ḥajjāj's enemies.

Improved Cultivation and better Irrigation

The second measure taken by Al-Ḥajjāj was to bring under cultivation certain parts of Sawād, which is the most fertile part of the valley of the Tigris and the Euphrates. Already in the reign of Mu'āwiyah, 'Abdullāh ibn Darrāj, freed slave of the Caliph had been charged to collect taxes in 'Irāq. 'Abdullāh ibn Darrāj had obtained a vast area of land in the swamps and its produce amounted to 15 million dirhems. 'Abdullāh had the reeds which covered these swamps cut and he held back the water with the help of dikes, and barriers that he constructed[2]. Under Caliph Al-Walīd

1. 'Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. I, Pp. 103-104.
   Balādhurī, 'Futūh', P. 290.
2. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. I, Pp. 103-104.
   Balādhurī, 'Futūh', P. 290

I, a freed man of Banū Dabba called Hassān Nabateen, dried up new swamps to the profit of Al-Hajjāj, who spent huge sums of money on these works. In order to dry up these lands, the workers of Al-Hajjāj constructed dikes and canals for drainage. Once some dikes were broken and Al-Hajjāj took a million dirhems from treasury for their repair and construction but Al-Walīd found the expenditure too heavy. Al-Hajjāj thus devoted his attention to the canal system of the swampy lands in the midst of the main marshy region we have seen, he founded his town of Wāsit. Al-Hajjāj[1] constructed the canals of Nīl and Zābi to irrigate the new capital. The surveyor who did the designing under Al-Hajjāj and Cliph Hishām was, Hassān Nabateen[2].

Al-Hajjāj often gave as fief vast fertile uncultivated lands to deserving Arabs. This is how he gave to *Bashshār Ibn Muslim* brother of the famous Qutaiba ibn Muslim several hundred acres (Jarīb) of land. Bashshār dug a canal there and made it productive[3]. But Al-Hajjāj refused aid and encouragement to the agriculturists who had taken part in the rebellion of 'Abdur Rahmān ibn al-Ash'ath. Several dikes irrigating their lands were broken and the waters flooded the properties of these dihqāns who had failed to show loyalty to the Amīr in his adversity. Al-Hajjāj who was vindictive never agreed to repair the ravages caused by the flooded rivers. The dikes remained unrepaired and the lands of these dihqāns unproductive[4].

Care of the Cattle

The third means used by Al-Hajjāj to improve agriculture, was to preserve the cattle. He forbade the peasants to slaughter oxen and prohibited them to eat beaf. Al-Hajjāj introduced into the marshy lands the Indian buffallows, which ue also supplied to Calicia[5].

1. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj', Pp. 103-104.
   Balādhurī, 'Futūh', P. 294.
2. Balādhurī, Pp. 274 and 294.
3. Balādhurī, 'Futūh', P. 361.
4. Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. I, P. 351.
5. Balādhurī, 'Futūh', Pp. 290 and 375.

Standardisation of Weights and Measures

The credit of standardisation of weights and measures also goes to Al-Ḥajjāj. He severely preserved the equitability in the market transactions and saw that the merchants and shop-keepers did not exploit the poor customers.

The Arab historians[1] generally affirm that the situation of 'Irāq did not regain its ancient prosperity inspite of these measures of Al-Ḥajjāj and that the state revenues from taxes, between the Tigris and the Euphrates, did not become better. They go to the extent of saying that after the death of Al-Ḥajjāj, the situation in 'Irāq was the most miserable. But one cannot hesitate to admit that these opinions of the historians are attributed in a spirit of hostility and in the nature of the reforms undertaken by Al-Ḥajjāj and their subsequent outcome, such comments and critical observations do not represent the condition of the country rightly. One must accept them with reservation, for one cannot fail observing that the political descendants of Al-Ḥajjāj returned to his administrative measures more than once and if they failed to reap the full benefits of his measures, it was not the fault of the man who had succesfully introduced them but it was their personal incapacity that failed to grasp their full significance and practical application.

Foundation of Wāsiṭ

The city of Wāsiṭ was founded by Al-Ḥajjāj in 83 A.H. The construction of the new capital was completed in 86 A.H. It was built on the old town of Wāsiṭ al-Qaṣab in Kaskar on the west bank of the river Tigris. It commanded a central position in the entire 'Irāq and the main object of the Governor in founding the new city was to prevent future aggression and opposition to him. It became the seat of the Government of 'Irāq and the principal military cantonment for the Syrians.

The city of Wāsiṭ was founded by Al-Ḥajjāj in 83 A.H. (702 A.D.). Balādhurī[2] states that it was founded in 83 or 84 A.H. Abū'l Fidā[3] states that the foundation stone of the city was laid in

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1306.
   Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', Pp. 64 and 66.
2. 'Futūh', P. 290.
3. 'Taqwīm al-Buldān', Pp. 54 and 306.

84 A.H. and that it was completed in 86 A.H. Ibn Qutaiba[1] states that it was constructed in two years and was founded in 83 A.H.[2] Ṭabrī[3], Al-Athīr[4], Jāḥiẓ[5], Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī[6], and Ya'qūbī[7], state that it was founded in 83 A.H. Yāqūt[8] himself confirms that the construction of the city lasted from 83 to 86 A.H. and thus puts to agreement all the chroniclers.

Arab historians and geographers give different reasons for the construction of the new city of Wāsiṭ.

Yāqūt says, that after Al-Ḥajjāj had finished the wars, he wanted first to settle down in Kūfa but he disliked the Kūfities as they also hated him. Thinking that this mutual hatred was irreducible, Al-Ḥajjāj sought the help of the physicians for selecting a healthy site to found a new city. The observers made a survey of 'Irāq and declared on their return of the tour that they did not find a place more propitious than Wāsiṭ al-Qaṣab, whose waters were sweet, climate temperate, flora and fauna healthy and savoury and the air nimble[9].

In Ṭabarī's opinion, the Syrians who were far from their country and their families had no settled abode. They remained in their camps or they received hospitality in the homes of the natives. In order to change the situation which bred disorders amongst them and preserve the moral strength of his best soldiers, Al-Ḥajjāj selected a favourable site where the Syrians would establish their cantonments[10].

No doubt Al-Ḥajjāj had an implacable distrust of the 'Irāqians as they had for his administration and that he also desired a separate home for the Syrians, but the principal cause in our view, that compelled the Viceroy of 'Irāq to select a new site for his capital was the desire to provide himself with a safeguard against any future aggression or opposition to him. The

1. 'Uyūn al-Akhbār', Vol. P. 148.
2. 'Ma'ārif', P. 156.
3. 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1126.
4. 'Kāmil', P. 337.
5. 'Bayān wa-Tabyīn', Vol. I, P. 86.
6. 'Tahzīb al-Tahzīb', Vol. I, Pp. 210-213.
7. 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 331.
8. 'Mu'jam', Vol. IV, P. 884.
9. Yāqūt, 'Mu'jam', Vol. IV, Pp. 883 and 886.
10. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1126.

new capital could provide a house to his favourite soldiers, the Syrians upon whose help he could count at all times and also serve bulwark between the two aggressive cities of Basra and Kūfa. Admirably situated on the west bank of the Tigris, equidistant from Kūfa, Basra and As-Sūs, i.e. about 50 farasakhs from each place[1], it could command a central position to the entire 'Irāq and hold the whole province under the hands of the Viceroy.

The city of Wāsit was founded on the old town of Wāsit al-Qasab in the district of Kaskar[2]. Balādhurī remarks that the name Wāsit al-Qasab signified the fertility of reeds in the earth[3]. The city derived its name Wāsit from the central position it occupied midway between al-Kūfa, Al-Basra and Al-Ahwāz[4]. Wāsit, says Ya'qūbī, consists of two cities, situated on the two banks of the Tigris. The old city which was the residence of the 'dihqāns' (cultivators) is on the east bank. It is called Kaskar. Al-Hajjāj built the new capital on the western bank and linked the two cities by a bridge of boats[5]. Thus as Kūfa had been built near the ancient city of Al-Hīra, Wāsit was constructed by the Arabs not far from the old town of Kaskar[6].

When the Viceroy arrived at the selected spot of Wāsit says Tabarī, a monk came to meet him mounted on a she-ass. The ass set aside its legs and watered on the earth. The monk alighted from his mule, carefully gathered the wet soil and threw it into the river, showing thereby that the place was sacred. Al-Hajjāj who had observed all this, asked the monk the reason of this strange behaviour. "We find in a book", replied the monk, "that a mosque will be constructed at this place, where people will offer their prayers so long as there is on this earth a believer in the only God". Al-Hajjāj then had the plan of the city of Wāsit made and built a great mosque in that place[7].

1. Balādhurī, 'Futūh', P. 290.
   Yāqūt, 'Mu'jam', Vol. IV, P. 881.
2. Abū'l Fidā, 'Taqwīm al-Buldān', Pp. 54 and 306.
   Ibn al-Faqīh, 'Kitāb al-Buldān', P. 269.
3. Balādhurī, 'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 337.
4. Abū'l Fidā', Ibid.
   Ibn al-Faqīh, Ibid.
   Ibn Rusta, 'A'laq an-Nafīsa', P. 187.
5. 'Kitāb al-Buldān', P. 332.
6. 'Mu'jam', Vol. IV, Pp. 774-775.
7. Tabarī, 'Tarīkh', Vol. II, P. 1126.

It was in the city situated on the western bank of the Tigris that Al-Ḥajjāj had the great mosque, the castle or palace of the Governor and the famous "Green cupola" (Al-Khadrā) constructed[1]. The city itself was surrounded by an enclosed wall and two ditches. Yāqūt give the dimensions of several places in the new capital. The castle was 400 square cubits, the great mosque 200, the area of the place before Ḥaddādūn (quarters of the Iron Smiths) was 300 square cubits and the place bordering the Jazzārūn (quarter of butchers) and the Ḥauḍ (reservoir) was 300 cubits long and 100 broad and the place situated before Al-Miḍmār (race course) was 200 cubits long and 100 cubits broad[2]. The same author also names other places situated in the interior of the city: Dīmās, i.e. the prison constructed at Wāsiṭ by Al-Ḥajjāj[3] and Mashra at al-Fil (the meeting place of the elephants), so called because an elephant, sent by Muḥammed ibn al-Qāsim, the conqueror of Sind, was unloaded at this place from the ship which had brought it[4]. The founder used clever expedients to close the castle and great mosque at night. Yāqūt says that Al-Ḥajjāj removed the gates of Zandaward an old city near Baṣra which was now overshadowed by the construction of Wāsiṭ[5]. He also brought the gates from Dauqara situated near Wāsiṭ and equally ruined[6], also from Dārūsāṭ[7], from Dair mā Sirjān and from Sarābīṭ[8]. It is true that the inhabitants of these cities strongly protested; they reminded Al-Ḥajjāj that they had received 'safety' for their cities and their properties at the time of the Arab conquest. The Viceroy left them crying and kept what he had taken[9].

1. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 290.
   Ibn Rusta, 'A'lāq an-Nafīsa', Pp. 185-186.
   Ya'qūbī, 'Kitāb al-Buldān', P. 322.
   Ibn Ḥauqal, 'Al-Masālik, Wal-Mamālik', Vol. I, P. 239.
2. Yāqūt, 'Mu'jam', Vol. IV, P. 885.
3. Yāqūt, 'Mu'jam', Vol. IV, P. 714.
4. Yāqūt, 'Mu'jam', Vol. IV, P. 885.
5. 'Mu'jam', Vol. IV, P. 884 and Vol. II, P. 951.
6. Yāqūt, Vol. IV, P. 884 and Vol. II, P. 621.
7. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 290.
8. Yāqūt in a passage in Vol. IV, P. 884 writes Dair mā Sirjis but in another passage Vol. II, P. 63 he writes as does Balādhurī on P. 290, 'Dair mā Sirjān' Balādhurī writes Sharābīṭ and Yāqūt Sarābīṭ.
9. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 290.
   Yāqūt, 'Mu'jam', Vol. IV, P. 884.

Al-Ḥajjāj spent 43,000,000 dirhems on the construction of his palace, the great mosque and the ramparts of the castle. Ṣālih ibn 'Abdur Rahmān, his secretary told him that if 'Abdul Malik demanded an account of these expenses, he would be angry at this wastage. The greatest fear of Al-Ḥajjāj was to lose the favour of the Caliph. Advised by his secretary, the Viceroy ear-marked 34,000,000 as the expenses of war and 9,000,000 only for the construction of the building of Wāsīṭ[1].

When Al-Ḥajjāj had constructed this city he informed the Caliph in these words "I have chosen for myself a city in the stomach (kirsh) of the region situated between the mountain and the two capitals (Baṣra and Kūfa) and called it Wāsiṭ". The original expression used by Al-Ḥajjāj gave to the citizens of Wāsiṭ the surname of 'Kirshiyyūn' (inhabitants of the stomach)[2].

When Al-Ḥajjāj did not need the services of the Nabaṭeens i.e. the native, who had helped him in the construction of the city, Al-Ḥajjāj ordered them to go away. They cannot be authorised to live in my city, said he, "for they will corrupt it"[3]. And he populated it with the Syrians and alien families. A great number of Turks who had been deported from Bukhārā after the earlier expeditions or had freely migrated to Baṣra were inhabited by Al-Ḥajjāj in Wāsiṭ, side by side with his favourities, the Syriāns[4].

Al-Ḥajjāj who was jealous by nature could not withstand another construction equal to his new city. He, therefore, demolished the palace of Ziyād ibn Abīhi at Baṣra and then asked the experts to give their opinion about the new city. One day, while seated in the interior court, he asked a person of his court "How do you find this cupola"? "Nothing more beautiful has been constructed before our period", replied the courtiers in chorus[5].

Yāqūt narrates an interesting incident. One day when Al-Ḥajjāj was in his sitting room, a servant came to inform him that one of the young girls of the ḥarem, for whom he had much affection was possessed. Al-Ḥajjāj called from Kūfa a certain 'Abdullāh ibn Hilāl, who was known as the friend of the devil.

1. Yāqūt, 'Mu'jam', Vol. IV, P. 884.
2. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 290.
   Yāqūt, 'Mu'jam', Vol. IV. Pp. 883 and 886.
3. Yāqūt, 'Mu'jam', Vol. IV, P. 886.
4. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 349.
5. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 349.

This man came and cured the patient. "My friend", said Al-Ḥajjāj who appeared to be superstitious at the time, "I fear that this castle is haunted"! "I will use a recipe which will drive out what you are afraid of", replied 'Abdullāh ibn Hilāl in return. After three days 'Abdullāh ibn Hilāl came again carrying a heavy earthern jar, which was sealed. "O Amīr", said he, "if you want to purge this castle, then you will have to bury this jar in the centre of this building and you will not have such a disagreeable thing in the castle again". "What is the proof of all what you are saying, O Ibn Hilāl"? asked Al-Ḥajjāj, "The Amīr should order ten of his most robust companions to lift this jar one after the other, they will not be able to do so". "By the order of Al-Ḥajjāj the assistants of the Amīr tried in vain. Al-Ḥajjāj then took a mat which was before him, passed it in the handle of the jar and said, "In the name of the merciful and kind God! Certainly, your master is the God, Who has created the heaven and the earth in six days". And at the same time, he put his two feet on the dias, held the jar by the mat and lifted it. After putting it on the ground he thought for a moment with his head bent and said in an angry tone, "Take your jar and go back". "Why"? asked 'Abdullāh, "This castle will be ruined one day after my death". said Al-Ḥajjāj, "Another person will live in it and some worker while digging will find this jar and say, "May God curse Al-Ḥajjāj who undertook nothing except with the help of sorcery"! The friend of the devil took his jar and went away[1]. Al-Ḥajjāj who had dissipated faith in superstition on many early occasions equally belied it today. A rationalist as he was he could not believe in sorcery or witchcraft.

Al-Ḥajjāj was equally interested in the agricultural prosperity of Wāsiṭ. As the adjacent territory around the new capital was unfertile, he dug two canals for irrigation and gave them the name Nīl and Zāb. The land around was reclaimed for cultivation in this way. There were also important farms that 'Abdullah ibn Darrāj, freed slave of Mu'āwiyah had exploited near Wāsiṭ to the advantage of the Caliph. These farms were now unproductive and covered with marshes and bushes. Al-Ḥajjāj got the reeds cleared and build dikes to stop the floods of the Tigris. Then, by his order these lands were cultivated in the interest of the state[2].

1. Yāqūt, 'Mu'jam', Vol. IV, P. 885.
2. Yāqūt, 'Mu'jam', Vol. IV, P. 883.
Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 290.

According to Balādhurī, Al-Hajjāj also built the town of Nīl on the canal of the same name and dug by him[1].

However, Wāsiṭ did not find favour with the enemies of Al-Hajjāj, neither with the satirist poets. Ibn al-Qirriya of whom we have already spoken expressed his pity for the man who had founded this city.

بناها فى غير بلده ويتركها لغير ولده

"He has built in a country which was not his and will leave it to others than his children"[2]. Nevertheless, Wāsiṭ remained the seat of the Government of 'Irāq long after the death of the son of Yūsuf. It became the principal military centre of Islām and retained its strategic importance during the Caliphate[3].

1. 'Futūh', P. 290.
2. Balādhurī, P. 290.
3. Muir, the Caliphate, P. 349.

AL-ḤAJJĀJ AS VASSAL

Whereas Al-Ḥajjāj's relations with Caliph 'Abdul Malik were more personal and political, they were mostly administrative and informal with Caliph al-Walīd. While 'Abdul Malik confided greater trust in him, the latter enjoyed more power and liberty under his son. Al-Ḥajjāj's relations with his caliphs were the determining influence in the growth and development of Umayyad power. He was the virtual founder and consolidator of their strength.

The political and personal relations that existed between Caliph 'Abdul Malik and his son Caliph al-Walīd on the one hand and Al-Ḥajjāj, their vassal, on the other, were the determining factor in the growth and development of the Umayyad power in the first century Hijrī.

His relations with 'Abdul Malik

From the time of his appointment to the rear-command against Muṣ'ab ibn az-Zubair, Al-Ḥajjāj enjoyed absolute confidence of Caliph 'Abdul Malk. The latter called upon him from time to time, either to defeat a strong and powerful foe or to surmount an inveterate and rebellious people. Al-Ḥajjāj responded to the calls of the Caliph with steadfast vigour and unshakable fidelity. Like a whirlwind he swept everything before him to the disadvantage of his enemies. The Amīr proved to be an indispensable benefactor to his superior, who looked upon him as the veritable founder of his Empire.

'Abdul Malik knew the heavy oddities against which his faithful servant had to fight. He, therefore, did not spare any measure to help him whenever such an assistance was sought. He supplied him with reinforcement and the best Syrian recruits; he appointed and revoked men on his advice; he left critical decisions to the inspiring moments of his servant. When 'Ubaidullāh made

the humilating peace with Rutabīl, Al-Ḥajjāj looked to the Caliph for advice and expressed his desire to send against Rutabīl a powerful army to be recruited at Kūfa and Basra. 'Abdul Malik wrote, "In this my advice is that you follow your own feeling in as much as it will be wise and inspired by God"[1].

The Caliph could at no time spare to lose the services of his faithful servant. On Al-Ḥajjāj's request for resignation, the Caliph wrote, "But do not think of your resignation any more, till God Himself brings to us, what He is reserving us for". Again he wrote to him on another occasion, "You are for me a Sālim". Al-Ḥajjāj did not understand what the Caliph implied and wrote to Qutaiba ibn Muslim seeking the explanation of the words. "This Sālim", wrote Qutaiba, "was a slave whose master had a great esteem for him and as they used to tell him many bad things about this servant", replied he: "They want to alienate Sālim from my person, but it is I who will alienate them. As long as there is flesh between his nose and his eye, Sālim will be intact". 'Abdul Malik then desired to say; "You are as dear to me as Sālim was to his master". This explanation of Qutaiba ibn Muslim pleased Al-Ḥajjāj so much says Mas'ūdī, that he appointed him Governor of Khurāsān[2].

'Abdul Malik loved to discuss political terms with Al-Ḥajjāj. He asked him in a letter, the definition of revolt: "The revolt", replied Al-Ḥajjāj, "grows in secret talks, reaps in the midst of wailing and is only crushed at the expense of great perils". The Caliph appreciated the reply and wrote: "Your response is perfect and the definition excellent"[3].

It is not that the Caliph always expressed his satisfaction at Al-Ḥajjāj's works, he often disapproved of his actions. There were occasions when Al-Ḥajjāj committed grave mistakes and evinced the irascibility of his temperament. On such occasions the Caliph expressed his remonstrances and served as a restraining influence on the vassal. When 'Urwah ibn az-Zubair fled to Damascus after 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair's death, Al-Ḥajjāj requested the Caliph to send 'Urwah to him, so that he might recover his brother's money from him. The Caliph refused to concede to

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1043.
'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 318.
2. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, P. 127.
3. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, P. 126

Al-Ḥajjāj's request and ordered him to be quiet about him[1]. The Caliph's disapproval of his servant's actions often ended in a severe condemnation. The posthumous desecration of the body of 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair was severely condemned by the Caliph as an act of savage barbarism[2]. And the body was ordered to be returned to Asmā', the mother of 'Abdullāh ibn az-Zubair. After the battle of Dair al-Jamājim, Al-Ḥajjāj perpetrated some mass persecutions. Thereupon the Caliph charged him with having "spread waves of blood and squandered wealth". He ordered him to practice moderation and vigour[3].

'Abdul Malik partially accepted the religious piety of his servant. At the time of Ḥajj after the death of ibn az-Zubair, he ordered Al-Ḥajjāj to imitate the example of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar. There could hardly be a more painful order. But the general obeyed and performed the Ḥajj as an ordinary man[4]. The Caliph assumed a threatening and humiliating tone when Al-Ḥajjāj insulted the old companion of the Prophet, Anas ibn Mālik. He wrote to Al-Ḥajjāj, "I think you wanted to sound the Prince of the Believers' disposition towards him (Anas ibn Mālik); you must know that he (Caliph) disapproves of such a conduct and that you have become a horror for him"[5]. His fear was cloathed in a threat and he added, "I will cut you to pieces as the lion cuts a fox. I shall strike you so hard that you will like to return to your mother's womb"[6]. On such occasions the Caliph showed himself to be the superior and master of his vassal.

1. ' 'Ansab al-Ashrāf', Pp. 61-63.
   Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, P. 291.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 291.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Vol. III. P. 20.
2. ' 'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 57-60 and 62.
   'Aghānī', Vol. XIII, P. 44.
   Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj', Vol. III, P. 122.
   Ibn Baṭuṭa, 'Voyages', Vol, I, Pp. 330-331.
3. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, P. 141.
4. ' 'Ansab al-Ashrāf', P. 71.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Vol. III, P. 16.
   Ibn Khallikān, 'Wafayāt', Vol. I, P. 349.
5. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Vol. III, Pp. 17-18.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, Pp. 313-314.
6. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, Ibid.
   Ibn al-Athīr, Ibid.

Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi has conserved for us another very severe letter in which the Caliph accused Al-Ḥajjāj of ingratitude and cruelty. He blamed him for the disorder in the province and made him understand that he would one day repent all his mischiefs. Al-Ḥajjāj "replied that he was put down by the accusers and tried to explain and justify his severity and his manner of rule. Then he added humbly as he always did, that he would leave his faith to the decision of 'Abdul-Malik[1].

At another time, the Caliph wrote to the Governor of Irāq censuring his prodigality. "It has come to the notice of the Prince of the Believers, that you spend in a day, what he spends in a week; in a week what he spends in a year. This is contrary to justice and righteousness. O Al-Ḥajjāj! I recommend to you the fear of God in all circumstances; humiliate yourself before the menance of God, your Master. Increase the Kharāj and the booty of the Musalmāns; be for them a protector and an invincible fortress"[2]. Al-Ḥajjāj accepted the advice of his master and replied, "I have received from the Caliph the covers which enclose written and rolled papers. Amongst them is a letter where mildness, cruelty and advice are mixed; the counsels are profitable to a man gifted with intelligence"[3].

Al-Ḥajjāj always remained faithful and showed unshakable obedience and loyalty to his master under all remonstrances and threats, however, underserving they were at times. He was never diffident in the fulfilment of his master's orders and as a result enjoyed considerable power and control. He found a pleasure in serving his master and feared his displeasure.

إذاأنالم اتبع رضاك وأتق   أذاك فيومي لاتزول كواكبه

"If I do not seek your satisfaction, if I do not fear your dissatisfaction, let all my days be exposed to danger"[4]! wrote Al-Ḥajjāj to the Caliph after the battle of Dair al-Jamājim. He was always desirous to be advised and saved from the extremes of his temper which often verged on the brink of barbaric cruelty. He could never think of losing the favours of his master.

1. ''Iqd al-Farīd', Vol. III, P. 9.
2. Balādhurī, ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 217.
   Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, P. 179.
3. Balādhurī, ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 217.
4. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, Pp. 178-180.

فقف بي على حد الرضا لا أجوزه   مدى الدهر حتى يرجع الدر حالبه

"Place me within the limits of thy favour and I shall not come out of it any more, so that the milk (favour) may come back to the donor (milker)". Al-Ḥajjāj confessed unhesitatingly his faults to his master but prayed to be allowed to retain the honours he had won with the sweat of his brow for he was loyal and trustworthy.

وإلا فدعني والأمور فإنني   شفيق رفيق أحكمتني تجاربه

"Then let me act, for I am a faithful and devoted servant whom experience has made wise"[1].

Al-Ḥajjāj equally gave advice to the Caliph. When 'Abdul-Malik swayed away by the advice of his courtiers at Damascus, agreed to revoke his faithful 'servant' if 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn al-Ash'ath agreed to submit to the terms of peace offered through the brother and son of the Caliph, Al-Ḥajjāj wrote to his master :

يا أمير المؤمنين والله لئن أعطيت أهل العراق نزعي لا يلبثون إلا قليلا حتى يخالفوك
ويسيروا إليك ولا يزيدهم ذلك إلا جرأة عليك

"O Prince of the Believers ! Be assured that if you grant by dismissal to the people of 'Irāq, they will not take long to revolt against your authority and take up arms against you. Your concessions will have no result but increase their audacity against you". He then cited the example of Caliph 'Uthmān yielding to his opponents who finally assassinated him. But 'Abdul Malik had decided for once, to sacrifice his faithful servant rather than win or lose with him. He overrode his advice. But the negotiations with 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn al-Ash'ath failed and war was resumed with the rebel.

إنما أقاتل لكما وإنما سلطاني سلطانكما

"It is for you that I wage the war. My power is your power"[2], said Al-Ḥajjāj to the messengers who had brought the happy news of the failure of the negotiations. Al-Ḥajjāj had re-affirmed his faith in the representative nature of his position, uttered the first

1. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj', Vol. III, Pp. 178-180.
2. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, P. 1075.

time when he had ordered the tents of Rauh ibn Zinbā' to be burnt and said to the Caliph 'Abdul Malik:

انما يدى يدك وسوطى سوطك

"My hand is thy hand; my whip is thine"[1]. Al-Ḥajjāj then fought his inveterate enemy who had almost cost him his political career and routed his forces at Dair al-Jamājim. He had retained his faith in the filial fulfilment of his duties. It was a rare example of servile obedience faithfully honoured.

Al-Ḥajjāj convictions in the supremacy of his master amounted almost to a spiritual faith in his sacredness. One day he learnt that 'Abdul Malik had sneezed. "I came to know" he wrote to the ruler, "that the Prince of the Believers had taken a sonorous sneeze, to which several courtiers replied, 'May God bless you'! Then the Prince of the Believers replied, 'May God grant us His pardon'! May it have pleased Heaven that I had found myself among them! I would have deserved the most magnificent reward (Paradise)"[2]!

Al-Ḥajjāj paid several visits to the court of Damascus. At one of the interviews with his master at Damascus, the conversation covered the various regions of the Muslim world and particularly the cities of Baṣra and Kūfa. Among those present, some preferred Kūfa because of its climate, agreeable water and its sweet fruits; others exalted Baṣra for being more commercial, more rich in sugar, ivory, teakwood and warriors. Al-Ḥajjāj went near the reality and said:

أما البصرة فعجوز شمطاء بخراء دفراء أوتيت من كل حلى وزينة اما الكوفة فشابة حسناء جميلة لا حلى لها ولا زينة

"As far as Baṣra is concerned it is an old lady with grey hair full of hideous and offensive breath but adorned with ornaments and decoration of all kinds. As to Kūfa it is a young, beautiful and charming girl, who is not adorned with any ornament and decoration". 'Abdul Malik concluded by saying that he accepted the statement of the Viceroy of 'Iraq and gave his preference to Kūfa[3].

1. Ibn Khallikān, Vol. I, Pp. 173-174.
2. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 294.
3. Ibn Faqīh, 'Kitāb al-Buldān', P. 163.
   Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj', Vol. III, P. 159.

Often the master and the servant were more informal. Here is a comic episode. Al-Ḥajjāj one day met 'Abdul Malik who had gone out on horse back. He got down from his horse and started walking on foot by the side of his master. But 'Abdul Malik trotted his horse and Al-Ḥajjāj was obliged to run. He soon became exhausted. Thereupon a courtier asked the Prince of the Believers whether he had yielded to a fit of anger against the son of Yūsuf, "No", replied the Caliph. "But he is proud and I wanted to make him humble"[1].

Death of Caliph 'Abdul Malik

As Caliph 'Abdul Malik grew old, Al-Ḥajjāj became uneasy about the succession to the throne. The heir to the throne was Prince 'Abdul 'Azīz, Governor of Egypt and brother of 'Abdul Malik, a personal enemy of Al-Ḥajjāj. Apprehending his future under this enemy-prince, Al-Ḥajjāj used to say, "There is nobody more frightful to me than he is ('Abdul 'Azīz). I would not pass a day without fearing a blow of some sort from him"[2]. In view of their mutual animosity, Al-Ḥajjāj desired to have a caliph of his choice. This he found in Prince Al-Walīd, son of Caliph 'Abdul Malik. He, therefore, sent in 85 A.H., a deputation under 'Imrān ibn 'Iṣām al-'Anazī, poet and orator, to the court of Damascus, to influence the Caliph to transfer the power to his son Al-Walīd[3]. Caliph 'Abdul Malik showed some hesitation at first but pressed by the fililal affection for his son and the pressing insistence of his faithful 'servant' and 'Imrān, he wrote a letter to the Governor of Egypt, his brother, asking him to renounce his claim to the throne. "I have for my son the same ambitions that you hold for your son Al-Walīd", replied the Prince. "Bring to me the Kharāj of Egypt", threatened the Caliph in another message. "Prince of the Believers", replied 'Abdul 'Azīz, "We have both reached an age rarely surpassed by the members of our family. No one of us knows who will die earlier. I request you not to embitter the rest of my days". These grave reflections and the request which accompanied them deeply moved the Caliph to abandon the plan

1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 362.
2. 'Aghānī', Vol. XVI, P. 60.
3. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1166.
 'Aghānī', Ibid.

of which the son of Yūsuf was the interested instructor[1].

'Abdul 'Azīz, for the good fortune of Al-Ḥajjāj died in Cairo, on the 1st Jumādā in 85 A.H. (May 705 A.D.). The Caliph, thereafter nominated his son Al-Walīd as his immediate successor, declaring that the successor of Al-Walīd would be Prince Sulaimān, one of his other sons. The choice of the caliph was announced in the provinces and the people took the oath of loyalty to the two princes. Once more death served to fulfil Al-Ḥajjāj's wishes, who saw all his enemies descend successively to the grave.

The next year, Al-Ḥajjāj was grieved to lose his best friend and supporter. Caliph 'Abdul Malik died on the 15th Shawwāl in 86 A.H. (8th October, 705 A.D.), at Damascus. Al-Ḥajjāj pronounced the funeral oration of his benefactor in the mosque of Wāsit.[2]

ثم وليكم البازل الذكر الذى جربته الأمور وأحكمته التجارب مع الفقه

وقراءة القرآن والمروءة الظاهرة واللين لاهل الحق والوطء لاهل الزيغ

فكان رابعا من الولاة المهديين الراشدين.

"Then came he who is remembered well ('Abdul Malik) over you as your ruler ; who was tested by the affairs ; made wise by ordeals with a knowledge of divine law recitation of the Qur'ān, courage and charity towards the righteous, the depressed and also the deviators. He was one of the four caliphs who were followers of the right path.

Al-Ḥajjāj's Relations with Al-Walīd

After the death of Caliph 'Abdul Malik in 86 A.H. (705 A.D.), Al-Walīd ascended the throne. Caliph Al-Walīd respected the last wishes of his father, who had recommended his faithful 'servant' to his sons in the following words, "Honour Al-Ḥajjāj, for he has paved the way to the throne"[3]. Al-Walīd retained Al-Ḥajjāj in service during his reign, gave him a free hand to govern and even in his own sphere of government took his advice and consulted

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1167.
 ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 241.
 Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil', Vol. IV, Pp. 409-410
2. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. II, P. 187.
3. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', P. 135.

him on state matters. At his instance he dismissed 'Umar ibn 'Abdul 'Azīz of the post which he had bestowed upon him, because under his rule Ḥijāz was becoming the refuge of political criminals and religious seditionists[1]. Al-Walīd equally dismissed Al-Mufaḍḍal from the governorship of Khurāsān and on the advice of Al-Ḥajjāj, appointed Qutaiba ibn Muslim, in his place.

When Yazīd ibn Muhallab escaped to Syria in 90 A.H. and took asylum with Prince Sulaimān, the brother of Caliph Al-Walīd, Al-Ḥajjāj convinced the Caliph that Yazīd would renew the revolt of 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn al-Ash'ath. The Caliph agitated, asked his brother to deliver up his guest to him. Prince Sulaimān supplicated but the Caliph remained unchanged and reiterated his order more severely. Sulaimān, thereupon, chained his son Ayyūb and Yazīd together and sent them to Al-Walīd. It was only the pleadings of a brother made under a great personal risk that the Caliph revoked his earlier decision[2].

Under Caliph Al-Walīd, Al-Ḥajjāj reaped the fruit of the hard work he had done under his father. There was peace in 'Irāq and he used all the means to heal the wounds of this bitterly-torn province. He devoted his time to dig the canals and alluviate the marshy region between the Tigris and the Euphrates. He tried to stem the depopulation of the fertile lands resulting from the thronging of the inhabitants into the larger towns. He fortified the frontiers of the province and sent generals like Qutaiba ibn Muslim to conquer Transoxiana and Muḥammed ibn al-Qāsim to reach the borders of India. Al-Ḥajjāj enjoyed full confidence of his master, in as much as he did not vacillate in his fidelity to him. If he unified and consolidated Muslim power under Caliph 'Abdul Malik, he extended its frontier and helped in the development of the arts of peace during the reign of Caliph Al-Walīd.

Al-Ḥajjāj did not have any personal relations with the Caliph. There were hardly any literary relations between the two. According to Ibn al-Athīr, it was due to the fact that Al-Walīd I, the most powerful of the Umayyad Caliphs was very defective in the art of speech. He did not know any grammar and made frequent mistakes when he talked[3]. Al-Ḥajjāj on the other hand, was well versed in speech and a patron of the men of letters.

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1254.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1213.
3. 'Kāmil', Vol. V, P. 96.

Al-Ḥajjāj's Enemies in the Royal House

Al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf had never a real friend in Banū Umayyah after the death of 'Abdul Malik. He had enemies in the royal family, who looked upon him as a tyrant and the majority of the princes and princesses of the ruling dynasty felt a deep aversion for him. In this aversion, one can count, it is true, a feeling of jealousy. This made him almost an isolated figure with enemies in the people he governed and enemies in the royal house he served. The antipathies of Khālid, son of Prince Yazīd and 'Abdul 'Azīz may be cited as examples.

An interesting interview between Khālid and Al-Ḥajjāj is mentioned in Aghānī[1] and 'Iqd al-Farīd[2]. Al-Ḥajjāj who was at Damascus on one of his routine visits to the capital as Governor of 'Iraq met one day Khālid ibn Yazīd who was accompanied by a Syrian. "Who is this person"? asked the Syrian pointing to Al-Ḥajjāj, who was posing as an important figure. "He is 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ"[3], replied Khālid sneeringly. Al-Ḥajjāj heard this remark and said in anger, "I am not 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ and he is neither my son nor my father; but I am the son of the respectable noble of Thaqīf and the virtuous mother of Quraish". And then returning Khālid's sneer in an equal rebuff, Al-Ḥajjāj added, demonstrating his sword, "I have killed with this sword more than 100,000 men, who are witness to the fact that your father drank wine and that your grand father and you are members of the Hell. Except for these services, I have received neither any salary nor any recognition from you". And Al-Ḥajjāj withdrew repeating, "He is 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ. He is 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ"[4].

Al-Ḥajjāj, we have seen, was equally the enemy of 'Abdul 'Azīz, the brother of Caliph 'Abdul Malik. Al-Ḥajjāj was also on bad terms with Prince 'Umar, his son. 'Umar ibn 'Abdul 'Azīz had been appointed Governor of Medīna by Caliph Al-Walīd in the year 87 A.H. (706 A.D.)[5]. He wrote a letter to the Caliph denouncing the oppression, tyranny and exactions of Al-Ḥajjāj.

1. 'Aghānī', Vol. XVI, P. 89.
2. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. II, P. 151 and Vol. III, P. 9.
3. 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ was the conqueror of Egypt.
4. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi places this sense in Medīna when Caliph 'Abdul Malik paid a visit to this city.
5. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1182.

happy at the recovery of the Prince of the Believers than Al-Ḥajjāj", murmured Al-Walīd, while returning to life. In fact the Governor of 'Irāq did not hide his joy. He wrote to the Caliph congratulating him on his recovery and telling him that when he learnt of this happy news, he prostrated himself face-wise on the earth and that he had freed all his slaves and was sending him some scent bottles made from Indian mangoes"[1]. Al-Ḥajjāj had his prayer granted. He died before Al-Walīd I.

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1272.
Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. V, P. 5.

AL-ḤAJJĀJ'S FAMILY TIES

In this chapter we will study Al-Ḥajjāj's family relations. Al-Ḥajjāj's family consisted of a brother Muḥammed, a sister Zainab, a number of wives, his four sons and one or two daughters. His relations with his brother and sister were always affectionate and with his children tender and loving. Al-Ḥajjāj divorced many wives and on more than one occasion for political reasons. He had blood relations with the royal family.

Al-Ḥajjāj, as stated earlier, had an elder brother Muḥammed and a young sister Zainab. Muhammed was appointed Governor of Yemen by 'Abdul Malik and he administered this province during his life time. He was a strict and stern ruler like his brother and representations made against him either to Al-Walīd or Al-Ḥajjāj remained unheard[1].

The Governor of Yemen had four children, three sons, Yūsuf, Muṣ'ab, 'Umar and a daughter. The latter was married to Yazīd son of 'Abdul Malik and brother of Al-Walīd. Yazīd ascended to the Caliphate in 101 A.H. (719 A.D.). The first born of this union received the name of the Governor of 'Irāq and that is why his mother was called Umm Al-Ḥajjāj. Her eldest son never ruled but she had a second son who held the name of Al-Walīd II[2].

The niece of Al-Ḥajjāj did not even escape the hands of his enemies after his death. Under the region of Sulaimān, Yazīd ibn Muhallab did not spare the niece of his inveterate enemy. He extorted her wealth that she had inherited from her father. The pleadings of her husband Yazīd (later Yazīd II) went unheeded. The latter swore that if he ever came to power, he would have the son of Muhallab cut to pieces; whilst the other equally declared that he would meet him with a hundred thousand lances.

1. ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 194.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd' Vol. III, P. 95.
2. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. II, P. 341.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. V, Pp. 41 and 218.

When Muḥammed ibn Yūsuf, the brother of Governor of 'Irāq died, a fortune of 150,000 dīnārs was found in his private coffers. Al-Ḥajjāj informed Al-Walīd of it and added, "If my brother amassed this sum honestly, may God have pity on him! But if it comes from abuse of power (corruption), may God not spare him"! "Muḥammed acquired this money in a business which I had authorised him", replied Al-Walīd. "Be lenient to your brother and may God have mercy on him"[1]!

Al-Ḥajjāj's sister Zainab was renowned for her beauty which was often mentioned by the poets. Al-Ḥajjāj, who jealously guarded the honour of his family, resented any reference to his sister. At the time when he was young, the poet Muḥammed ibn 'Abdullāh ibn Numair, the Thaqīfite, known by the name of An-Numairī composed several 'Qaṣīdas' on Zainab and expressed in them his love for her. The poet was a drover at Aṭ-Ṭā'if and made several journeys to Mecca. It appears that his donkeys while passing the valley of Nu'mān frightened the ladies by their sonorous brayings. When Zainab had taken a vow to go on foot from Aṭ-Ṭā'if to Mecca, to implore in the holy house for the recovery of her father who was sick, she crossed on her way the valley of Nu'mān, where she met the poet Numairī. The latter composed on the youthful girl, a poem which contained the following verse :—

تضوع مسكا بطن نعمان اذ مشت　　　به زينب فى نسوة عطرات

"The valley of Nu'mān exhales the perfume of Musk, when Zainab walks there".

Al-Ḥajjāj considered this panegyric as an insult to his honour and on meeting the poet one day in the streets of Mecca he followed him and hurled abuses at him. In order to escape Al-Ḥajjāj's resentment, An-Numairī had no other recourse but to find refuge in Syria at the court of 'Abdul Malik. The Caliph had a strong liking for his poems and his spirited rejoinders. At a session when the poet was reciting his famous 'Qaṣīda' on Zainab, the Caliph interrupted him suddenly to ask what this cavalry was, to which he spoke solemnly, "Three donkeys charged with asphalt", replied the poet, "Three more donkeys of my friend's carrying manure". The Caliph laughed at this buffoonery. Then he said to the poet. "I will raise a little your condition and that of your cavalry". And

1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 294.

soon he wrote to Al-Ḥajjāj forbidding him from troubling a poet so amusing and harmless[1]. Al-Ḥajjāj. reports Aghānī, threatened to revolt at this defence of the Caliph. But An-Numairī one day recited his poem to the Governor of 'Irāq. Al-Ḥajjāj found him inoffensive ; his anger cooled down[2].

When Al-Ḥajjāj wanted to marry his sister, he proposed to her to choose between two cousins : Muḥammed ibn al-Qāsim ibn Muhammed ibn Abī-'Aqīl and Al-Ḥakam ibn Ayyūb ibn al-Ḥakam. The former 27 years old was an accomplished youngman. He was the future conquerer of Sindh. The latter was an aged man. Zainab married Al-Ḥakam ibn Ayyūb. He obtained from Al-Ḥajjāj the prefectship of Baṣra in 75 A.Ḥ. (694 A.D.) when he replaced Khālid ibn 'Abdullāh, till the year 82 A.H. (701 A.D.)[3].

At the time when 'Abdur Rahmān ibn Muḥammed ibn al-Ash'ath the rebel was marching on the city of Baṣra, the Governor of 'Irāq sent his own harem, with his sister to Syria to keep them in security. Then after his victory, he hastened a messenger to inform his sister about this success. At the time when the message of her brother was handed over to her, Zainab was being carried in a litter on a mule. This animal got sacred at the crackle of the leaves of the papers and ran at full speed. Zainab fell down from the mule and succumbed to the wounds that she received in her arms and back. Thus the messenger who was carrying the news of triumph to the sister, announced to the brother her death. An-Numairī composed an elegy on the death of this woman[4].

The Governor of 'Irāq had a number of wives. As Amīr of Medīna he married a lady of Banū Hāshim. She was the daughter of 'Abdullāh ibn Ja'far ibn Abi-Ṭālib and a grand niece of Caliph 'Alī[5]. This woman called Umm Kulthūm was married under order of the Governor but reluctantly by her father. 'Abdullāh ibn Ja'far took his revenge by inviting the attention of Khālid son of Caliph Yazīd to the matter. Khālid, had the marriage dissolved through the intervention of 'Abdul Malik. The son of Yūsuf then married

1. 'Aghānī', Vol. VI, Pp. 24-26.
2. 'Aghānī', Vol. VI, Pp. 24-26.
3. 'Aghāni', Vol. VI, Pp. 26-28.
4. 'Aghānī', Vol. VI, Pp. 28-29.
   Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 872, 972 and 1061
5. 'Aghānī', Vol. XIII, P. 107.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. III, P. 292.

Umm al-Julās, daughter of 'Abdullāh ibn Khālid ibn Asīd[1]. Among his wives, the author of 'Al-'Iqd al-Farīd', also mentions Al-Fari'a, daughter of Habbār[2]. Before he was appointed Governor of 'Irāq, Al-Ḥajjāj had also married the two daughters of Nu'mān ibn Bashīr. One of them was called Umm Abān; the other named Hamīda was divorced by Rauḥ ibn Zinbā', vizier of 'Abdul Malik. She was equally abandoned by her new husband. One day she came to him holding in her hand a 'Qaṣīda' full of tender thoughts. Al-Ḥajjāj divorced her saying that since he ruled the wicked race of 'Irāq he had no time to dream of her love[3].

But the two most known wives of Al-Ḥajjāj were Hind, daughter of Al-Muhallab; and Hind, daughter of Asmā' ibn Khārija "Chief of Banū Fazāra".

Ṭabarī relates the occasion of the divorce of the first as follows. He states that in the year 90 A.H. Al-Ḥajjāj returned to Rustaqaba<u>dh</u> to punish the Kurds who had invaded the province of Faris[4]. He took with him Yazid ibn al-Muhallab who was his prisoner since 86 A.H.[5] and also his two brothers, Al-Mufaḍḍal and 'Abdul Malik, equally prisoners. They were underguard in a tent close to him. Al-Ḥajjāj had condemned the former Governor of Khurāsān, on a charge of embezzlement of 6 million dirhems that he owed to the treasury and as Yazid was not able to pay the amount, Al-Ḥajjāj put him to torture. Yazīd cried in pain when his foot in which the point of an arrow had remained tortured him. Having heard the painful cry of her brother, Hind, the wife of Al-Ḥajjāj began to cry. She was then divorced by Al-Ḥajjāj. Thereafter Yazid escaped to Syria and found asylum at the court of Caliph Sulaimān, brother of Caliph Al-Walīd[6].

The details of the union and divorce of the second Hind are as follows: Al-Ḥajjāj often compelled the fathers of families to give their daughters to those whom he himself wanted to reward or to give him their hand in marriage. The latter was the case with Asmā' bint Khārija. His daughter Hind had formerly loved the old

1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 198.
   'Aghānī', Vol. XIII, P. 107.
2. Ibn Abd Rabbihi, Vol. III, P. 7.
3. 'Aghānī', Vol. III, P. 140 and Vol. XIV, P. 130.
4. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, P. 1208.
5. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 1181 and 1209.
6. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, P. 1209.

Governor of 'Irāq, 'Ubaidullāh ibn-Ziyād. The death of the latter had left her deeply unconsoled. In his memory she shouted, "I sigh to see the face of 'Ubaidullāh ibn Ziyād after resurrection"! She was married to Bishr, brother of Caliph 'Abdul Malik and Governor of 'Irāq. Two children were born to them. Later, when Al-Ḥajjāj arrived at Kūfa after the death of Bishr ibn Marwān he sent to her Abū Burdah ibn Abī Mūsā al-Ash'arī, Qāḍī of this town, to ask her for the two children of Bishr, nephews of the Prince of the Believers. Al-Ḥajjāj offered the excuse that it was his duty to take the two princes to his palace and bring them up as his sons. Abū Burdah went to the house of Asmā' at the time when he was with his daughter. Recognising the Qāḍī of Kūfa, the latter invited him to share their meal and as Abū Burdah refused Hind started amusing and laughing. "By God"! said then the messenger, "If she knew the aim of my visit she would weep". At these words Hind ceased to laugh and lost all appetite. "As you have then prevented her from eating", said Asmā', "tell us, then the purpose that has brought you here"! Abū Burdah revealed the object of his mission. Hind wept as he had said but she was obliged to resign herself. "I will send my two children to him", she said, "for there is no one else who can bring them up better". Asmā' also gave his consent reluctantly and Abū Burdah satisfied with their declaration returned to the Governor to announce to him the success of his mission. At the same time, he described to him the charms of this woman, "the most beautiful that he had over seen". "Return to her", said Al-Ḥajjāj, "and ask her to marry me". Abū Burdah reappeared before Asmā'. "I come back", said he. "on a mission different from the first one". "Tell us what you desire"? "I come to ask Hind for marriage". "If it is for you, we have no objection". "It is not for me but for him, who is more valuable than I". And Abū Burdah expressed the intention of Al-Ḥajjāj. Having heard the offer of the Governor of 'Irāq. Hind kept silent. Her father spoke for her. "I agree", said he, "to give my daughter to Al-Ḥajjāj". The marriage was celebrated[1].

The first time, the Governor of 'Irāq sent to his new wife a sum of 100,000 dirhems and twenty dresses; the second time 30 servants each carrying 10,000 dirhems and 30 young girls each carrying, stuff for robes. Then he sent for Hind to come and join

1. Jāḥiẓ, 'Al-Maḥāsin', Pp. 239-240.

him the same evening. Led in ceremony with her escort of servants and young girls, Hind went to the palace of the Governor.

While parting from his daughter, Asmā', said to her, "My dear child, mothers give education to their daughters but your mother died when you were small. Make a permanent use of the best of good perfumes, which is pure water and the best of ornaments, which is 'Kohl' (collier made of a powder of antimony). Avoid making frequent reproaches because reproaches destroy love, beware of jealousy because it is the basis of divorce : be a servant to your bridegroom and he will be your slave".

But this wise advice was not followed ; for when Al-Ḥajjāj took his wife to Baṣra, he divorced her there This was done because, according to Aghānī she did not find the palace of Al-Ḥajjāj as beatiful as that of the man she had loved, 'Ubaidullāh ibn-Ziyād[1].

Al-Ḥajjāj soon regretted this decision which jealousy had dictated. One day he met Muḥammed ibn 'Abdullāh, one of the friends of 'Abdul Malik, son of Hind and Bishr. He said to Muḥammed, "My dear, I have thought over Hind just now. I have never seen a woman more beautiful and charming than her. I will call her back before the evening is over". "May God protect the Amīr, replied Muḥammed, "If this lady was divorced for some fault and that you recall her now, people will think that she is indispensable to you. Moreover, you will furnish her with a proof that you committed an injustice in divorcing her". "You are right", replied Al-Ḥajjāj. "Patience is preferable". And Muḥammed the author of this story adds, "In reality, it was not my sympathy for Al-Ḥajjāj nor the desire to give him an amicable advice, which made me speak like this, but I was feeling sorry to see the mother of a man as that of my friend's changing a master every moment"[2].

According to Mubarrad, Al-Ḥajjāj divorced the two Hinds for a motive completely different from those given above. He dreamt that both of his eyes had been taken out. He then obeyed one of those frightful superstitions which preoccupied him sometimes and divorced his two wives, thus hoping to dispel the bad omen. Soon after his son Muḥammed died and the same day Al-Ḥajjāj received the news of the death of his brother, Muḥmmed,

1. 'Aghānī', Vol. XVIII, Pp. 128-130.
   Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', Pp. 349 and 355.
2. 'Aghānī' Vol. XVIII, P. 131

Governor of Yemen, "Here is" cried he, "the interpretation of my dream. We belong to God and we return to him"[1]. Ibn Khallikān places the death of Muḥmmed, Governor of Yemen, in the month of Rajab in the year 91 A.H. (May 710 A.D.)[2].

Al-Mubarrad's interpretation of the dream in terms of the superstitious reference to the divorce of the two Hinds cannot be accepted. Al-Ḥajjāj had always tried to dispel superstitious fears and never given way to them. On the other hand we can accept the openion of Aghāni that it was on both the occasions the instinct of jealousy that promoted Al-Ḥajjāj to divorce the two Hinds. Hind the daughter of Al-Muhallab's sympathies for her brother Yazīd and Hind the daughter of Asmā's, reference to the palace of her lover were in themselves independent reasons (other than the death of two Muḥammeds) which compelled Al-Ḥajjāj to divorce them. Al-Ḥajjāj was a man who was scrupulously jealous of his honour and could not brook any equal. We, therefore, accept the version of Aghānī.

Al-Ḥajjāj had several children, amongst who was a daughter who married Masrūr, son of Al-Walīd I[3]. Ibn al-Athīr also mentiones a daughter of Al-Ḥajjāj who married one of the sons of Caliph 'Abdul Malik[4]. Among the four male children of the Governor of 'Irāq three bore the names dear to the Umayyads i.e. Abān, 'Abdul Malik, Al-Walīd. We have already spoken of Muḥmmed who was the eldest and who died whilst the father was alive. At the time of the chronicler ibn Qutaiba, this Muḥammed had still descendants at Damascus and 'Abdul Malik, his brother had at Baṣra. As to Abān and Al-Walīd they died issueless[5].

The Caliph 'Abdul Malik gave two of his children the names which were the most dear to the Governor of 'Irāq: One of the sons of 'Abdul Malik was called Muḥmmed and another Al-Ḥajjāj. To the latter, the son of Yūsuf gave a house situated in Damascus and called ever since the house of Al-Ḥajjāj[6]. The families of the

1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Pp. 291-292
2. 'Wafayāt', Vol. I, P. 177.
3. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. II, P. 327.
4. 'Kāmil', Vol. V, P. 75.
5. 'Ma'ārif', P. 174.
6. Balādhurī, ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 155.
   Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1174.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. II, P. 327.

master and the 'servant' had established blood relations.

Al-Ḥajjāj like all Arab parents loved his children and pressed them very often with tenderness against his heart. He was not a devout Musalman for he often disregarded pious usages where his political interests were concerned, but nevertheless gave his children the education that he believed, could secure their happiness and conformed to the doctrines of the Prophet. When there was the question of appointing a teacher for his son Muḥmmed, two teacher were proposed to the Governor of 'Irāq. One a scholar but a Christian ; the other a lesser erudite but Muslim. Al-Ḥajjāj chose the latter because he shared his faith.

فقيل له، ههنا رجل نصرانى عالم وههنا مسلم ليس علمه كعلم النصرانى. قال:
ادعوا الى المسلم فلما أتاه قال ألا ترى ياهذا أن قد دللنا على نصرانى قد ذكروا
أنه أعلم منك غير أنى كرهت أن أضم الى ولدى من لا ينبههم للصلاة عند
وقتها ولا يدلهم على شرائع الاسلام ومعالمه وأنت إن كان لك عقل قادر
على أن تتعلم فى اليوم ما يعلمه أولادى فى جمعة وفى الجمعة ما يعلمهم فى الشهر
وفى الشهر ما يعلمهم فى سنة

"You see", said he while receiving him, "We had been advised to take a Christian ; they had added that he had more knowledge than you do but I felt repugnant to trust my children to man who would not exhort them to offer their prayers regularly, neither teach them the holy laws of Islām, nor the particular forms of this religion. Any way, if you are intelligent, you can learn in a day what my children will learn in a week, in a week what they will learn in a month, and in a month what they will learn in a year"[1].

Al-Ḥajjāj sometimes exercised family favouritism. But it was fortunate that his *family appointments usually proved* successful. His son though young commanded an army and his cousins held high positions under him. Al-Ḥakam ibn Ayyūb, his brother-in-law rendered great services to Baṣra where he was replaced by his son Ayyūb. Muḥmmed ibn al-Qāsim, his cousin made conquest of Sindh (India) where his predecessors had failed miserably. The three sons of Al-Mughīrah, the Thaqifite, held important positions under him. There were 'Urwah, prefect of

1. 'Aghānī', Vol. XVIII, P. 78.

Kūfa, Al-Muṭarrif, prefect of Madā'in who revolted and Ḥamzah, prefect of Hamadhān[1].

One day, Al-Ḥajjāj received one of his cousins from the desert. "O Amīr"! said the Beduin to Al-Ḥajjāj, "Why don't you give me one of those estates to govern"? "They know how to write and calculate while you neither read nor count. Divide then three dirhems among four persons". The Arab began to repeat several times. "Three dirhems among four persons. If each receives a dirhem, there will be nothing left for the fourth . . . . . . How many are they"? "Four". "Ah well, here is my calculation; each will have a dirhem and to the fourth I shall give a dirhem from my pocket", and putting his hand to his pocket, he held out a dirhem saying, "Who is the fourth amongst you? I swear by God that I have never seen anything so false as the account of these citizens". Al-Ḥajjāj laughed and so did the witnessess to the scene. The Viceroy signed the commission of Isfahān for his cousin[2].

The inhabitants of Isfahān had withheld their financial contribution for three years and not paid the dues to the tax-collectors. On arriving at his post, the new commissioner permitted a time limit of ten months to his subjects but asked them to offer their men as his hostages. The inhabitants did not pay the taxes till the tenth month. The cousin of Al-Ḥajjāj then took one of his hostages and beheaded him and wrote the following: "Such and such person, son of so and so had paid his debt". Then he put the head in a sack and sealed it. He did the same with another man. Seeing that the heads of the hostages were being put in sacks in lieu of money, the people hastened to pay the Kharāj. And Al-Ḥajjāj said,

فقال الحجاج: فكيف رأيتم فراستى فى الأعرابى ....؟

"Don't you think that I had the perspicacity in selecting this Bediun"[3].

1. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 124, 131, 142 and 148.
2. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, Pp. 179-180.
3. Mas'ūdī, Ibid.

Commenting on the nature of disobedience perpetrated in heaven Al-Ḥajjāj continued,

لوكان شئ مانع العصاة لمنعت آدم حرمة الجنة لان الله خلقه بيده ونفخ فيه
من روحه وأسجد له ملائكته وأباحه كرامته وأسكنه جنته فلما أخطأ اخرجه
من الجنة بخطيئته وآدم اكرم على الله من ابن الزبير والجنة اعظم حرمة
من الكعبة اذكروا الله يذكركم

"If there was some thing to save the rebels, the sanctity of the Paradise would have protected Adam, for God had made him with His own hands, infused life in him and made the angels bow to him. He had revealed His thaumaturgy to him and lodged him in the Paradise but he (Adam) comitted the sin. God turned him out of the Paradise and Adam is more noble and honourable to God than Ibn az-Zubair and Paradise is greater to Ka'ba! Remember God and He shall remember you"[1]. Assured in the strength and process of argument the grief-stricken citizens returned to their homes.

On Departure from Medīna

Regretting his recall from Ḥijāz in order to take up his post at Kūfa, Al-Ḥajjāj delivered one of his irreverent utterances. "Praise be to God" ! he shouted, "Who has made me go out of a furnace of seditions, whose inhabitants are the most deceitful towards the Prince of the Believers and who envy him most his fortune.

والله لولا ما كان ياتيني من كتب أمير المؤمنين فيهم لجعلتها مثل جوف الحمار
اعوادا يعودون بها ورمة قد بليت ، يقولون منبر رسول الله وقبر رسول الله
أما والله لأ لحونكم لحو العصا ولاعصبنكم عصب السلمة ولاضربنكم ضرب غرائب
الابل

"By God, if I had not received the letters from the Prince of the Believers in their connection, I would have rendered the city similar to the valley of Al-Ḥimār ; I would have spared neither these pieces

1. 'Asākir, 'Tārīkh al-Kabīr', Vol. IV, P. 50.

of wood, which they often visit nor a corpse already consumed since long; things about which they say: It is the seat of the Apostle of God; it is the tomb of the Apostle of God"[1].

On Arrival at Kūfa

When Al-Ḥajjāj mounted the pulpit, relates Mubarrad[2], he used to wrap himself in a cloth of silken stuff and started his speech in a voice so feeble that the audience could hardly hear him but he swelled his voice gradually and suddenly taking out his hand from underneath his cloak, he would shout in a voice so resounding that it made the listeners tremble at the extremity of the mosque. Speaking in such a mode to the people of Kūfa from the pulpit on his arrival in 'Irāq, Al-Ḥajjāj disclosed his identity with a verse quoted from an ancient poet[3]:
"I am he who scattereth darkness and climbeth lofty summits. As I lift the turban from my face ye will know me". And then the fiery speaker continued, "O people of Kūfa! Certain am I, that I see heads ripe for cutting and verily I am the man to do it. Methinks I see blood between the turbans and the beards[4].

Al-Ḥajjāj then revealed his intent and purpose in the poem of Ruwaishid ibn Rumaiḍ al-'Anbarī.
It is the hour of battle, defend courageously, O Zīam (his horse or she-camel) the troops that the night has entrusted to a relentless rider.
He is not a shepherd of camels or of ewes, nor a butcher sitting quietly on his seat of wood.
The night has given their charge to a brave and capable person who makes admirable escapes from danger; he is an emigrant and not a nomad Arab.
The war has tucked up her clothes and laid bare her legs:
Fight! She has become terrible for you; redouble your efforts.
For the bow-string is as hard as the shin-bone of a she-camel, if not harder. It is, therefore, necessary to resign to the events which are inevitable[5].

1. ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 77.
2. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 173.
3. Suḥaim ibn Wathīl ar-Riyāḥī.
4. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Pp. 215-216.
5 Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Ibid.

He then issued a threat :

أما والله لألحونكم لحو العصا ولأعصبنكم عصب السلمة ولأضربنكم ضرب غرائب الإبل

"By God ! I shall strip you as the wood is stripped off its bark ; I shall tie you as they tie a thorny bush ; I shall beat you mercilessly as the she-camels which leave their flocks[1]".
And then referring to the holy Qur'ān said :

فانكم لكأهل "قرية كانت آمنة مطمئنة يأتيها رزقها رغدا من كل مكان فكفرت بأنعم الله فأذاقها الله لباس الجوع والخوف بما كانوا يصنعون"

"You resemble the inhabitants of the town who enjoyed security and *calm, and who received from all parts an abundant subsistence* but showed themselves urgrateful towards the benevolence of God and were, therefore, struck by terror and famine as a prize for their actions".
Al-Hajjāj then stated his determination to carry out his project.

واني والله لا أعد إلا وفيت ولا أهم إلا أمضيت ولا اخلق إلا فريت

"(But know it well), if I make a promise, I keep it ; if I conceive a project, I execute it ; if I issue orders, I see that they are carried out"[2].

On the Nature of Takbir

Threatened by the tumult and disturbance in the city on the third day of his arrival, Al-Hajjāj ascended the pulpit and addressed the assembly thus :

"People of 'Irāq, men of discord and hypocrisy, men of mischievous nature, I heard a 'Takbir' which is not of the nature by which we attract God but draw menaces. Yes, I have understood that it was a tumultuous populace excited by the tempest of passions. Children of abject women ; slaves of batons ; issue of serpents ! My example and yours is best illustrated in the words of Ibn Burāqa :

1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 219.
2. Tabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 870.
Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj', Vol. III, Pp. 135-136.

وكنت اذا قوم غزوني غزوتهم ... فهل أنا في ذا يا لهمدان ظالم

متى تجمع القلب الذكي وصارما ... وأنفا حميا تجتنبك المظالم

"If a nation attacks me, I attack it.
Am I among the cruel men of Hamadhān ?
When a sagacious mind, a sharp sword and self-respect unite in you, tyrannies will avoid you"[1].

On the Defence of Kūfa and Basra

In a Khuṭba addressed to his soldiers at Rustaqabādh, Al-Ḥajjāj acquainted them with his resolution and exhorted them to defend their hearths and homes. "People of the two great cities", he said, "this place will be yours month after month and year after year until God has destroyed your enemies, the Khārijites who constitute a permanent menace hanging over your heads"[2].

When Shabīb marched on Madā'in, Al-Ḥajjāj uttered to the people of Kūfa a similar address. He appealed to them to fight for the defence of their cities and properties. "O people ! God is my witness that you will fight for the defence of your cities and for the conservation of the properties that you have captured from the infidels. or else I will address myself to the people who are more obedient, more thoughtful, more constant than you in adversity and anger. These men will wage war against your enemies and eat your booty", "We will fight our enemies", shouted the Kūfites rising to the occasion. "We will give satisfaction to the Amīr. Let him send us against the rebels wherever it pleases him. We will go"[3].

Appointing 'Attāb ibn Warqā over them and giving their command to him, Al-Ḥajjāj mounted the pulpit in the mosque and said to them, "O inhabitants of 'Irāq ! put yourself in the fight, under the command of 'Attāb ibn Warqā. I do not allow any man, if he is not in the administration, the permission to remain here". And then in a more reflective tone said, "Don't you know that the brave soldiers obtain respect and glory in the holy war, while the

1. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. II, P. 185.
Abī'l Ḥadīd, 'Nahj'l Balāgha', Vol. I, P. 114.
1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 874.
Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 309.
3. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 941.

cowards only reap disdain and oppression ? I swear by Him who is the only God that if you behave like your predecessors in this theatre of war, I shall put you under a stern control. I shall press you with all my power and stifle you"[1].

Disappointed at the flight of the deserters but still retaining his disdain for them, Al-Ḥajjāj ascended the pulpit and said "O people of Kūfa ! May God no more give power to those who sought it with your help ! May He not grant victory to those who expected it with your hands ! Get out of the city, go away from us. I don't want you to take part in the combats that we are going to fight with our enemies. Go to Al-Ḥīra and remain there in the midst of the Jews and the Christians. You are forbidden to fight on our sides ; there is only exception for my administrators and for the men who did not take part in the last battle with 'Attāb ibn Warqā"[2].

Address to the Syrians

Harnessing his troops into the campaign under his command against Shabīb, Al-Ḥajjāj said to them, "O Syrians ! You are the men who know how to listen and obey ; you are men of consistencey and firm faith. Let not the error of these weak men triumph over the truth you possess ! Bend the knees and with eyes fixed to the ground. welcome the enemy on the points of your lances"[3]. The Syrians bent their knees as they were told and with the lances suspended, similar to a land full of black stones, they waited immobile.

In one of his speeches after the victory of Az-Zāwiya he said to the Syrians at Baṣra,

لاتبغوا ولاتغلدوا وإياكم أن يبلغني أن رجلا منكم دخل بيت إمرأة فلايكون له عندي
عقوبة إلا السيف. أنا الغيور ابن الغيور، لا أواهي في الريبة ولا أصبر على الفاحشة

"You will oppress nobody and commit no exactions. Woe to you, if it be brought to my notice that one of my soldiers has entered the house of a woman, he will receive no other punishment from

1. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, P. 948.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 954-955.
3. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, P. 959.

me than that of the sword. I am the most jealous son of the very jealous who will not spare the suspects, who will never support the libertines"[1].

Running about from camp to camp on the eve of the battle with 'Abdur Raḥmān, Al-Ḥajjāj said to his soldiers (Syrians), "You are obedient men, "said he to them, "while your enemies are rebels; you work zealously to please God, while they only work to displease Him. The usual conduct of God towards you in all the encounters has been full of grace. On all the battlefields where you have fought with energy, God finally granted you victory and successs. Throw yourself with new ardour on your enemy tomorrow and I have no doubt that you will be victorious"[2].

On the victory of Dairal-Jamājim.

Al-Ḥajjāj celebrated his success over 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn al-Ash'ath by an address to the citizens of Kūfa.

يا أهل العراق ان الشيطان استبطنكم فخالط اللحم منكم والعظم والأطراف والأعضاء وجرى منكم مجرى الدم وافضى الى الأضلاع والأمخاخ وحشا ما هنالك شقاقا واختلافا ونفاقا ثم أربع فيه فعشش وباض فيه ففرخ

"Inhabitants of 'Iraq, Satan is incorporated in you. He is mixed in your flesh in your bones and limbs, in every part of your body; he circulates in your veins; he has entered your ribs and the marrow of your bones; he has stirred up revolt, rebellion and perfidy; he is settled in you; he has made his nest there and hatched his eggs". You have made of him a guide and his footsteps you follow; he is a chief whom you obey, a master whose orders you attend to; were you not in the ranks of his army in Ahwāz, when you tried to betray me and united against me? You thought that God would abandon Islām and the caliphate. But I held God to witness that I would overtake you, even when you tried to escape stealthily by a rapid flight or a quick desertion; each one of you wore a sword round his neck as a sign of cowardice and baseness. Later, on the day of Az-Zāwiya, we have seen your lack of courage, your abjection, and maledictions, with which God

1. 'Ansāb', P. 350.
2. Tabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1098-1099.

had struck you. Your protector withdrew from you when you fled like camels that seek refuge in their stable. The father was no more worried for his son, the brother never turned round to his brother while the sword corroded your flesh and the lance broke your bones. And the day of Dair al-Jamājim! What to say of this day full of terrible battles, gigantic fighting, where fatal blows made the birds of the night fly from their haunts where they were sleeping and made a friend forget a friend? People of 'Irāq, what can I still hope from you? What can I ask you for? Why should I let you live? For what purpose should I spare you? It is because your existence adds to your revolts, because new dissensions are to be added to the old ones? What can I hope from you? What can I expect? You tremble before the enemy at the frontiers. Whether you are in fear or security, you betray. You do not know how to recognise a good turn or how to pay with thanks a favour. O People of 'Irāq! Any miserable can stir you by barking; any wanderer can call you; any perjurer can excite you to revolt, any rebel can seek your help; you proclaim him immediately, you follow him, you give him asylum and protection. Inhabitants of 'Irāq, when the sedition roars, when a hoarse cry of agitation reverberates, when an imposter emerges, you become his assistants and votaries. Is this experience then useful to you? Can counsels safeguard you? Has adversity taught you? Has your heart moved at the punishment God has inflicted on you at the beginning and at the end of all these events"? Then turning to the Syrians he said,

يا أهل الشام أنا لكم كالظليم الرامح عن فراخه ينفى عنهن القذى ويكنفهن من المطر ويحفظهن من الذئاب ويحميهن عن سائر الدواب لا يخلص اليهن معه قذى ولا يفضى اليهن ردى ولا يمسهن أذىً - يا أهل الشام انتم العدة والعدد والجنة فى الحرب إن نحارب حاربتم او نجانب جانبتم وما انتم واهل العراق الا كما قال نابغة بنى جعدة،

وإن نداعيهم حظهم   ولم ترزقوه لم نكذب

"But as to you, people of Syria, I am like the ostrich who defends its little ones with the help of its paws, who protects their sight,

shelters them from the rain, guards them from the wolves, preserves them from the attacks of all the wild beasts; with her they are no more afraid for their eyes, they are sheltered from all evil, outside the reach of danger. Inhabitants of Syria! You are my strength and my help, my shield in the battle; if I fight, you fight; if I withdraw, you withdraw with me. You are a comparison to the people of 'Irāq, as An-Nābigha, the poet of Banū Ja'dah said: "When your message calls them, they never reject and never tell a lie. . . . ."[1]

On the Conception of Revolt

Defining the nature of revolt Al-Ḥajjāj said one day, "O People of Kūfa, revolt is conceived in whispers; it breeds in complaints and is harvested by the swords. By God! if you hate me, it shall not harm me; if you like me, it will not serve any good. I am not afraid of your enemy nor satisfied with your friendship. You claim that I am a sorcerer and God has said, 'the magician never flourishes' but I have prospered. You assert that I know اسم الاكبر ; if so then why do you fight with me"? Al-Ḥajjāj then turned towards the Syrians and said, "Your women are more odourous than musk and your sons more sincere than other children. You are what Akhū banī Dhībān says:

اذا حاولت فى اسد فجورا   فانى لست منك ولست منى

هم درعى التى استلأمت فيها   الى يوم النسار وهم مجنى

"If I discover any degenerate in the clan of Asad,
I am not for you and you are not for me.
They are my armour with which I am clad on the day of Nissār
and they shield me"[2].

On His Own Sickness

Having fallen ill, Al-Ḥajjāj heard seditious rumours circulating among the populace. As he was convalescing he went to the Mosque of Kūfa and while leaning on the crutches, he declared,

1. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. II, Pp. 139-141.
2. Abī'l Hadīd, 'Nahj'l Balāgha', Vol. I, P. 115.

"Men of discord and hypocrisy! the breath of Satan has penetrated your nostrils and you shout, Al-Ḥajjāj is dead! Silence! and listen to what the servant of God says: 'In reality, I do not hope to enjoy full happiness other than in the life beyond this. God has bestowed on none of his creatures the virtue of immortality, except of course to the most abject of all, to Iblīs (Satan). In fact, the pious worshipper of God, Solomon, son of David said formerly, "O Lord! pardon me my fault and grant me a kingdom such as should not be granted to any one after me". This kingdom was granted to him and he vanished like a shadow and he became as if he never existed. "O people, you are like him". And then becoming more thoughtful, Al-Ḥajjāj continued,

كأنى بكل حى ميتا، وبكل رطب يابسا، وقد نقل كل امرء الى حفرته، فخدّ له فى الأرض ثلاث اذرع طولا فى ذراعين عرضا، فأكلت الارض لحمه، ومصت من صديده ودمه، وانقلب الحبيبان يقتسم احدهما صاحبه: حبيبه من ولده يقتسم حبيبه من ماله، أما الذين يعلمون فسيعلمون ما أقول، والسلام

"Everything that exists, seems to me to be dying; all what is full of ripeness is drying up. Everyone is to be carried to his grave; he will be given a land of three yards by two yards. This earth will devour his flesh, it will absolve the water and blood of his body and then his dear ones will share among themselves his riches, the other object of his love. Those who understand, know what I mean. Greetings"[1].

This vein of vengeance and hatred for the 'Irāqians is again manifest in the speech reported by Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi. Al-Ḥajjāj one day said to the inhabitants of 'Irāq, "My desire is not to see you in peace. You cannot tolerate my words, I see; but you must know that your presence is to me the most disagreeable; unreservedly, I will reduce you to the obedience of the Prince of the Believers and I shall not tolerate the mischiefs that you compel me to endure"[2].

1. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Pp. 150-151.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. III, P. 186.
2. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. II, P. 186.
   Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 91.

On Going on Hajj

"O people of 'Iraq!" said Al-Hajjāj, "I have intended to go on Hajj and left as my lieutenant my son over you and you have to obey him. I have instructed him about you and recommended that he should act contrary to the instructions of the Prophet given to the Anṣār. Whereas he (the Prophet) recommended that the benevolent among them should be received and the vicious over-looked, I have instructed him neither to accept the benevolent among them nor to ignore the miscreants. You will in my absence say things which you cannot express now for fear. You will say : May God not make him deserving for the companionship of the Prophet'! "And I will at once say, may God not make you worthy of the caliphateship"! Al-Ḥajjāj then descended from the pulpit[1].

On the Death of 'Abdul Malik

Al-Ḥajjāj pronounced the funeral oration of his benefactor ('Abdul Malik) in the mosque of Wāsiṭ. After the usual praise to God, Al-Ḥajjāj said, "O people! God is blessed and supreme. He announced death to your Prophet (May be peace on him !) Himself saying 'You are mortal and they are mortal'. He continued, 'Muhammed is only a Prophet and there were many prophets before him. If he dies or is killed, you will take to run away'. "The Prophet (May be peace on him"!) said Al-Ḥajjāj, "died and also the other caliphs. Among them were Abū Bakr, 'Umar and the oppressed martyr Uthmān. Then Mu'āwiyah came in their wake.

ثم وليكم البازل الذكر الذى جربته الأمور وأحكمته التجارب مع الفقه
وقراءة القرآن والمروءة الظاهرة واللين لأهل الحق والوطء لأهل الزيغ
فكان رابعا من الولاة المهديين الراشدين.

Then came he who is remembered well ('Abdul Malik) over you as your ruler; who was tested by the affairs; made wise by ordeals with a knowledge of divine law, recitation of the Qur'ān, courage and charity towards the righteous, the depressed and also the deviators. He was one of the four caliphs who were followers of the right path. God then chose him (Al-Walīd) to succeed him.

1. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, Pp. 186,187.

And in his likeness enjoined to him wisdom, courage, firmness, tenacity and administration according to the divine instructions and propects of caliphateship".

"O People, listen to him and obey him! I warn you and the deviators that deviation confines one to itself. You have seen my conduct towards you. I know what is foul and fair in you. If I believed there was anyone more powerful; who knew you better than I do, I would not have become your Amīr. Now it is between you and me; for he who speaks shall be killed and he who remains silent will die panting in his own sickness.

On the Death of Two Muhammeds

Learning of the sad demise of his son Muhammed as well as his namesake and brother Muhammed[2], Al-Hajjāj said, "O people! two Muhammeds in a day. They have received, I hope, the reward of God in the future life, but I would have liked them to remain with me in this life. By God! the survivors amongst us and amongst you are going to disappear. The new comers are going to die and our friends too.

وايم الله ليوشكن الباقي منا ومنكم أن يفنى ...... وإن تدال الارض منا كما
ادلنا منها فتاكل من لحومنا وتشرب من دمائنا كما مشينا على ظهرها واكلنا
من ثمارها وشربنا من مائها.

The earth is on the point of inheriting from us as we inherited from her; it will devour our flesh and drink our blood as we have walked on its back, eaten fruits and drunk its water". Then will happen what God has predicted. He has blown the trumphet; by His order, the tombs have returned the men and men are returning to their Master hastening the step.

Al-Hajjāj ended this discourse by this poetic citation:

حسبي بقاء الله من كل ميت   وحسبي رجاء الله من كل هالك
إذا كان رب العرش عني راضيا   فان شفاء النفس فيما هنالك

"The survival of God is enough to console me for all those who

1. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, Pp. 186-187.
2. Muhammed, Governor of Yemen and brother of Al-Hajjāj says Ibn Khallikān died in 91 A.H. (Wafayāt, Vol. I, P. 177).

die; the hope of God is sufficient to comfort me for he who perishes; provided the master of the throne is satisfied with me, I shall find near Him the cure of my soul"[1].

Philosophic and Mystic Utterances

Along with these varied declarations, we find mystic and philosophic propensities in Al-Ḥajjāj.

ماسلبت نعمة إلا بكفرها ولاتمت الا بشكرها

"A grace is only withdrawn by God if it is refused and it only attains its fullness, if we show our gratitude"[2], said the orator in contemplation of the merciful and His bounty. And again when in counsel, he said,

اقدعوا هذه الانفس فانها أسأل شئ اذا اعطيت وأمنع شئ اذا سئلت
فرحم الله امرأ جعل لنفسه خطاما وزماما وقادها بخطامها الى طاعة
الله وعطفها بزمامها من معصية الله فانى رأيت الصبر عن محارم الله
أيسر من الصبر على عذابه

"Suppress the ill-conceived impulses of your mind for they are the insatiable beggars when we give unto them and sordidly avaricious when we ask of them. God shows His mercy to him, who puts a muzzle and a rein to his thoughts and leads his mind to His obedience. It is easier, I think, to abstain from doing things undesirable to God than suffer His penance"[3].

Al-Ḥajjāj often beseeched God for His guidance, at the critical moments of his life.

اللهم أرنى الغىّ غيا فاجتنبه وأرنى الهدى هدى فاتبعه

"God! show me where is the wrong way and I will avoid it; show me where is the right path and I will follow it", said he in earnest. He equally established a parallel between the present life and the future life and said,

1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 292.
2. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', P. 176.
1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 91.
Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Vol. II, P. 186.

فان الله عزوجل كتب على الدنيا الفناء والآخرة البقاء فلا فناء لما كتب عليه البقاء
ولا بقاء لما كتب عليه الفناء فلا يغرنكم شاهد الدنيا من غائب الآخرة.

"God, the most exalted has written of this world as ephemeral and of the other as eternnl ; that what is everlasting is endless and what is ephemeral never survives. May the world not allure you to make you forget what is not visible"[1] !

On the same subject, Al-Ḥajjāj said one day to the people of Baṣra, "God has supplied us with many things in this world and has ordained us to look to a future life. It pleased God to provide us well and He ordered us to pursue goodness in this world. Why do I see your learned men disappearing, your ignorant neglecting learning, and the mischievous among you refusing to repent ? Why do I see you covet the wealth that you already possess and squander that what we have ordered you to keep ?

إن العلم يوشك ان يرفع ورفعه ذهاب العلماء الا وانى اعلم بشراركم من
البيطار بالفرس الذين لا يقرؤون القرآن الا هجرا ولا ياتون الصلاة الا دبرا

"Knowledge is about to leave us because the learned men are dying. However, I know the wicked among you, better than the veterinary knows his horse. I equally know those who abandon the recitation of the Qur'ān and those who turn their back to prayers rather than offer it"[2].

"The world is a served table, placed before all men, the just and the preverse eat there but the future life is a delayed expiration, where a powerful king will reckon with men. Know it well, that since you have the fear of God, you will appear before Him ; He chastises the wicked for their evils and that He rewards the good with Paradise[3].

الا وان الخير كله بحذافيره فى الجنة الا وان الشر كله بحذافيره فى النار
الا وان من يعمل مثقال ذرة خيرا يره ومن يعمل مثقال ذرة شرا يره واستغفر
الله لى ولكم.

The just with their actions will be in the garden of God ; the wicked will be in the fire of Hell. And certainly, whoever does good to

1. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', P. 159.
2. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd', Vol. II, P. 186.
3. Qur'ān, 32.

the weight of an atom, shall receive it and whoever does bad to the weight of an atom, will also get it. I implore the mercy of God for myself and for you"[1]. It was with such exhortations of a teacher and a priest that Al-Ḥajjāj bespoke of the fears of God to his men. The oratorical talent of Al-Ḥajjāj was imbued with a richness of thought and instructive integrity of will. The fear of God was preponderant with him and he instructed the people to be right in thought and deed. One cannot fail observing that Al-Ḥajjāj inspired men to an elevated plan of life from where they could look before them and after.

Al-Ḥajjāj attached a great importance to the purity and elegance of language. He followed in that the distinguished Arabs of a time, where we see caliph 'Abdul Malik declare that the fear of making a seat of learning for barbarism and solecism had made his hair prematurely grey[2]. That is why the Caliph formed a society of the most refined speakers. Al-Ḥajjāj, sent to the Caliph, on his demand, the famous 'Amīr ibn Sharāhīl ash-Sha'bī, lawyer and poet[3]. As to Al-Ḥajjāj, he had always professors around him, who were charged to remark to him his verbal mistakes or defects in his pronunciation or incorrections in his sentences. The following tradition is reported by the Arab historians, to show how Al-Ḥajjāj procured the services of Yaḥyā ibn Ya'mur al-'Adwānī, the fine amateur stylist and elegant speaker. After his famous capture of the fortress of Bādhaghīs in 84 A.H. (703 A.D.) Yazīd ibn al-Muhallab charged his secretary Yahayā ibn Ya'mur to announce to Al-Ḥajjāj his famous victory. Al-Ḥajjāj was attracted by the beauty and purity of style of the messenger and request Yazīd for the services of the man who had dictated the letter. Yazīd accepted the request, whereupon, Yaḥyā ibn Ya'mur appeared before Al-Ḥajjāj. "Where were you born? asked Al-Ḥajjāj. "In Ahwāz", replied Yahyā "From where did you acquire this purity of language"? asked Al-Ḥajjāj. "From my conversation with my father that I have retained. He spoke admirably", said Yaḥiyā ibn Ya'mur. "Tell me then if 'Anbasa ibn Sa'īd makes any mistakes in lanuage". "Yes, many", said Yaḥyā. Al-Ḥajjāj then asked "and do I make any

1. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. II, P. 186.
2 Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol I, P. 235.
3. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. I, P. 148.
'Aghānī', Vol. IX, P. 169.
Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 154.

mistake"? "Yes, you make a few slight mistakes. For instance, you articulate certain letters too much and on others you do not stress at all. And then you say 'anna' instead of 'inna' and *vice versa*", replied the eloquent speaker. And according to the same tradition reported by Mubarrad[1], Yaḥyā was dismissed for his excessive zeal while ibn 'Abd Rabbihi reports[2], that Yaḥyā ibn Ya'mur was encouraged and rewarded. The latter source appears to us to be correct for it equally reports that 'Āmir ash-Sha'bī having remarked to Al-Ḥajjāj a fault of language, received from him a reward. Al-Ḥajjāj, in fact had a great love for correct and idiomatic conversation and it is thus that he became one of the men who have best spoken this language.

Al-Ḥajjāj, we have seen, wrote a number of letters to the Caliph as well as to his generals and governors of the eastern provinces. We give below some of his famous letters:

On seeking the help of the Syrian Forces

Al-Ḥajjāj wrote a number of letters to Caliph 'Abdul Malik. In one of his letters he acquainted the Prince of the Believers with the regular desertions of the Kūfites before Shabīb and requested him to send the Syrian forces to his help. "I announce to the Prince of the Believers (May God bestow on him His graces!) that Shabīb is on the point of attacking Madā'in and that he has the intention of attacking later Kūfa. The inhabitants of this town have been powerless to resist him in a great number of encounters; he has always killed the Amīrs and put the soldiers to the rout. Therefore, I request the Prince of the Believers to raise, if he considers it proper, an army from among the Syrians to come and fight the enemies of the inhabitants of 'Irāq and devastators of their country. Greeting"[3].

Relating the Victory of Rustaqabādh

After the victory of Rustaqabādh, Al-Ḥajjāj sent the decapitated heads of the rebel-leader (Ibn al-Jārūd) and his eighteen followers

1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 158.
2. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd', Vol. I, P. 295.
3. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 942-943.
   Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj', Vol. III, P. 147.

to Damascus. He also wrote a letter to the Caliph. "Praise be to God", he wrote "who is the preserver of the Prince of the Believers. When I encamped at Rustaqabādh, the people of 'Irāq swooped upon me; they attacked me and renounced my authority. They entered my camp and looted my belongings and said, "Get away from our country and return to the man who has sent you to us. Those who were at a distance from me", continued Al-Ḥajjāj, "deserted me; those who were close parted from me; while those who were dear to me disappointed me. I charged them with my sword. I encountered them in groups. I pronounced death for desertion and did not leave the field till God made the Prince of the Believers triumph over them. I excited a strife among the notables, chiefs, followers and the rebels. The exalted God killed the rebel of the nation and the enemy of God—Ibn al-Jārud and eighteen other chiefs. And the exalted God struck their faces so hard that they turned their faces to the East and the West. I gave 'safety' to the others. Thanks to God. Greeting"[1].

Depreciating his Recall from I'rāq

When Caliph 'Abdul Malik agreed to recall Al-Ḥajjāj from 'Irāq if 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn al-Ash'ath accepted his terms of peace, Al-Ḥajjāj wrote to the Caliph. "Oh Prince of the Believers! Be assured that if you grant my dismissal to the people of Irāq, they will not take long to revolt against your authority and take up arms againt you. Your concessions will have no effect but increase their audacity againt you. Has't thou not seen or heard that after having at their head Al-Ashtar, they threw themselves on 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān? When the Prince asked them what they desired, they replied, "The dismissal of Sa'īd ibn al-'Āṣ"? 'Uthmān dismissed him. However, hardly did the year pass when they entered into a campaign with the Caliph and assassinated him. You can only pay a man in his own coins. Then may God be your helper in the project you have entertained and grant you His salvation"[2]!

Concerning the Reprisals at Wāsit

Caliph 'Abdul Malik blamed Al-Ḥajjāj for 'shedding waves of blood and squandering the treasure' after the death of 'Abdur

1. Balādhurī, ''Ansāb', Pp. 293-294.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1073-1074.

Raḥmān. He equally disapproved his punishments perpetrated on the rebels. Al-Ḥajjāj wrote in reply to the Caliph. "I have received the letter in which the Prince of the Believers has accused me of shedding much blood and squandering the booty. In fact, I have not by punishing the rebels attained the measure of punishment which they deserved. I have only given to the faithful subjects the rewards which they deserved. However, if in killing these rebels I have been wasteful; if in rewarding these obedient subjects, I have surpassed my duties, the Prince of the Believers may pardon me for the past and draw for me a limit, which I shall never trespass, if it pleases God. To God alone belongs power. In fact, I am not susceptible to penalty or pain of offence, for the people have been victims of an error which either merits ransom or of premeditated violence which draws reprisals. It is in your name that I have rewarded; it is your good that I have condemned. Of the two orders that you have addressed to me, the sweetest for me is a favour, the most rigid is a pain to my eyes; I am ready to execute the one with mildness and support the other with resignation"[1].

On Recruiting Troops to fight Rutabīl

When Al-Ḥajjāj wanted to raise a powerful army against Rutabīl, Al-Ḥajjāj sought the advice and permission of the Caliph in a letter. He wrote, "I wanted to send against the Turks a powerful army to be recruited at Kūfa and Baṣra but prior to that I preferred to take the advice of the Prince of the Believers on this subject. If he judges it appropriate that I have to make this recruitment, I will do it. If he does not consider it proper, I know that the Prince of the Believers is liberal to dispose of his forces as he finds it fit. But I believe that if a powerful army is not sent immediately against Rutabīl and his polytheist subjects, they may make themselves master of all the neighbouring countries"[2].

In Defence of the Caliph

In a letter to 'Abdul Malik, he wrote that heaven and earth could not exist without the grace of the Caliph; in divine

1. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj', Vol. III, P. 142.
2. ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 317.

estimation, he was superior to the cherubims, to the Prophets and the Apostles. Al-Ḥajjāj supported his religious thesis by adding that God created Adam with his own hands, obliged the angels to worship him, gave him Paradise to live in; then he made him descend upon the earth, where he named him his lieutenant, and sent his angels as his ambassadors[1].

To Al-Walīd

When his brother Muḥammed, Governor of Yemen died leaving a sum of 150,000 dīnārs, Al-Ḥajjāj wrote a letter to Caliph Al-Walīd. "If my brother amassed this sum honestly, may God have pity on him! But if it comes from abuse of power (corruption), may God not spare him"! Al-Walīd was pleased to inform Al-Ḥajjāj that he had permitted his brother to acquire it[2].

To Khālid ibn Yazīd

When Prince Khālid intended to marry Ramlah, sister of ibn az-Zubair, Al-Ḥajjāj sent him a note chastising his proposal. "It was not appropriate for you, it seems, to ask in marriage a daughter of the family of Ibn az-Zubair without consulting me. I do not understand how you dared to address yourself to the people who are unworthy of your consideration as was declared by your grandfather, Muʿāwiyah I. Do you forget that they disputed the caliphateship of your father (Yazīd I), hurled gross insults on him, and declared that he and your grandfather professed a wrong faith"[3]?

Al-Ḥajjāj wrote a number of letters to his generals.

To Al-Muhallab

Al-Ḥajjāj wrote to Al-Muhallab on his arrival in 'Irāq, "Certainly Bishr ibn Marwān (May God have mercy on him!) felt aversion for you and affected to show you that he could carry on without your services. But I, on the contrary, show it to you that I need you, and you in your turn, show your ardour to fight

1. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd', Vol. II, P. 23.
2. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 294.
3. 'Aghānī', Vol. XVI, Pp. 88-89.

your enemy. Kill among the soldiers placed under your command, men whom you believe will revolt. Define to me the place in 'Irāq where the protectors of the deserters of your army have taken refuge, for I am of the opinion that we should hold responsible friend for a friend and namesake for a namesake"[1].

When Al-Ḥajjāj learnt of the dissensions among the Azraqites, he wrote to Al-Muhallab by way of advice, "I have received the letter in which you apprise me of the dissensions which divide the Khārijites. When this message reaches you, seize the opportunity and attack them before they re-unite and resist you with more formidable power. Greetings"[2].

When Al-Muhallb released the warriors of Muḍar, Al-Ḥajjāj wrote to him, "If you were right in putting them in prison, you are wrong in freeing them; if on the contrary, you are right to set them at liberty, you committed injustice in throwing them in prison"[3].

To Sufyān ibn Abī'l 'Āliya

When Sufyān ibn Abī'l 'Āliya was wounded in his fight with Shabīb and wrote an account of his heroic fight from Babil Mahrūdh, Al-Ḥajjāj wrote to him a letter, "You have given a great proof of your valour. You have done your duty. Return to your people when your sufferings are lighter. You will be compensated"[4].

To Al-Jazl ibn Sa'īd

To Al-Jazl ibn Sa'īd, who was sent to fight Shabīb, Al-Ḥajjāj wrote, "I sent you to war at the head of the best horsemen and the noble men of the Capital; I ordered you to pursue these heretics, wanderers, seducers until you reached them; I prohibited you to grant them relief until you had killed them and annihilated them. But you found it more comfortable to stay in the villages and to pitch tents in retrenched camps than to attack these infidels and fight them as I ordered you. Greetings"[5].

1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 667.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1007.
3. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 1041-1042.
4. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. III, P. 898.
5. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. III, P. 907.

Covered with wounds, Al-Jazl was carried to Madā'in. Al-Ḥajjaj wrote to him, "I am satisfied with the precipitation of Sa'id as well as with your slowness; as to his precipitation it has made him enter Paradise; as to your slowness, it has not prevented you from taking advantage of good opportunities. Leaving circumstances when they are not favourable, is also acting with firmness. You have fought heroically and deserve a reward. In my eyes you are one of those who should be listened to, whom you should obey and ask for advice. I am sending you Ḥayyān ibn Abjar to look after you and dress your wounds and I am sending you 2,000 dirhems. Use this sum for your personal needs and assuage the sufferings you have endured"[1].

To 'Abdur-Raḥmān

When Al-Ḥajjāj sent 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn al-Ash'ath against Shabīb, he was greatly incensed at the incorrigible weakness of the general. He wrote to him a letter stating, "You have taken the habits of evil minds. You have turned your back on the day of combat; these are the practices of infidels. As for me, I have already pardoned you once and then again at another time, but I swear by the most sacred and irrevocable oaths that if you repeat, I will inflict on you a punishment which you will find more terrible than this enemy in front of whom you run away, to go and hide yourself in the caverns of the valleys and gorges where you take refuge in the folds of the rivers and the detours of the mountains. Let him then tremble at himself; every person is gifted with the power of understanding, and let him not expose himself to my reprisals. I have warned you; I will be excusable"[2].

When Al-Ḥajjāj sent 'Abdur Raḥmān against Rutabīl, the general won some initial successes and then delayed his action acquainting the Amīr of his intentions. Al-Ḥajjāj wrote a letter, "Your letter is to hand; and I have understood what you have related. But it is the letter of a man who loves peace, who looks for rest in armistice, who uses caution towards an enemy little in numbers and despicable[3]. Al-Ḥajjāj added that he never approved

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. III, Pp. 913-914.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 929-930.
3. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1052.
'Ansāb', P. 323.

his manner of conducting his hostilities ; that he would never tolerate on his part apathy or temporisation of any sort ; and he ordered him to penetrate in the heart of the country to fight the enemy to death ; to occupy his fortresses, and to reduce his posterity to slaves.

In a second letter to 'Abdur Raḥmān, Al-Ḥajjāj wrote, "Order the Musalmāns who accompany you to till the land and settle there ; this country will be their sojourn till God grants them definite conquest"[1].

In a third letter he reiterated his intent and wrote, "Do as I have ordered you. Conduct the invasion in the heart of the enemy country ; or your brother, Isḥāq ibn Muḥammed will take the command of the troops"[2].

To Rutabīl about 'Abdur Raḥmān

Al-Ḥajjāj repeatedly wrote to Rutabīl to send 'Abdur Raḥmān to him when he had taken refuge at his court. In one of these letters he wrote, "Send him to me immediately. By God ! I will tread your country with an army of a million men"[3].

To Qutaiba ibn Muslim

In one of his notes to Quitaba ibn Muslim, he wrote, "Capture them by ruse and kill them"[4].

In another he wrote, "Command the vanguard during the raid ; on the return, remain at the rear-guard with the laggards"[5].

In one of his letters Al-Ḥajjāj demanded from Qutaiba the the plan of the town of Rāmīthan which he had failed to invest. Having received it and examined it, he wrote to Qutaiba the measures that he intended him to take for the capture of the town[6].

To Muḥammed ibn al-Qāsim

In a letter, Muḥammed ibn al-Qāsim received similar instructions on the capture of Daibul. Al-Ḥajjaj wrote, "Dress

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tarīkh', Vol. II, P. 1053.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1053.
   ' 'Ansāb', P. 324.
3. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, P. 1133.
4. Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. V, P. 12.
5. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, P. 1181.
6. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 1198-1199.

'Al-Arous' (name of a giant catapult) and shorten its one leg. Place the machine on the eastern side; then call the man incharge to handle it, and order him to aim at the mast, whose description you have given". The mast was the trunk of a huge palm tree[1].

Al-Ḥajjāj had already written a letter to Dāhir demanding the custody of the pirates who had pillaged the vessel carrying the Arab women back home. Dāhir had replied that he had no jurisdiction over the pirates Al-Ḥajjāj, thereafter, instructed Muḥammed ibn al-Qāsim to fight Dāhir[2].

Al-Ḥajjāj's letters, we have seen, are mostly political but their style is unique in the sense that there is nothing of sentimentalism and verbal phraseology in them. The meaning is conveyed in concise and intelligible terms and commands implicit compliance.

There is singular unity of thought and action in Al-Ḥajjāj's prose. There is clearness of conception and due subordination of language to thought is retained and conveyed to the reader in short, crisp, emphatic and homely words. Al-Ḥajjāj is seldom obscure, affective or eccentric. The energy of his manner is part of his matter. It corresponds to the abruptness of his thought. His thought proceeds by series of lightning phrases and breaks through the formal restraints of an ordinary sentence. Al-Ḥajjāj writes under the spell of his own vigour and convinces his reader more by reasoning than by feeling. He does not talk in his letters as would an essayist. He, in fact, speaks like a preacher from a pulpit and convinces like a school teacher of the logic of his argument. He is in every sense a mighty man, carrying everything before him.

We find in Al-Ḥajjāj's writings an individuality of thought and ambition. There is nothing priggish or dull with them. There is no way-sidetalk. There is always a topic in his head and he shares it with his audience straight away.

Al-Ḥajjāj's style is infinitely impressive and emphatic. It is marvellously responsive to his personality. Al-Ḥajjāj speaks in every line of his prose. There is balance in the structure of his phrases and strength in his sentences. His style is full of parallelisms, common place metaphors and ingenious similes. The

1. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', Pp. 436-438.
2. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 436.

brilliant lustre of his wit, is markedly of an original thinker. Like a rationalist he stimulates the reader with his effective logic and purposeful expression. There is less of emptiness in Al-Ḥajjāj and more of weight and pressure. There is in his prose the familiarity of a man who means what he says and who has the force of a hand to manipulate a sword.

Al-Ḥajjāj's love for elegant discourse is also evinced from the fact that he had like the Caliph, a sitting room for his 'evenings'— in his green cupola where he attracted not only the poets but eloquent men and other distinguished talents of 'Irāq and the neighbourhood. We see among them Ayyūb ibn al-Qirriyya whom Mas'ūdī presents to us describing to Al-Ḥajjāj the women, the most deserving of praise and the women, the most deserving of spite[1]. We also observe among these literary men 'Irār ibn 'Amr, who carried the head of 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn Muḥammed to the Caliph[2]; also the lawyer and poet Sumaira ibn al-Ja'd[3], but above all the famous literary figure of the time Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī the rival of Al-Ḥajjāj in the art of rhetoric. "We have not seen citizens, speaking their language with more purity than Al-Ḥajjāj and al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī", declares an Arab scholar[4].

Al-Ḥajjāj loved poetry; he was not himself a poet but like the literary men of his period. He sometimes expressed his thoughts in verse. He wrote some poems in his leisure hours but the literary value of his 'Dīwān' was never superior to the works of his contemporary poets and neither the author of Aghānī nor ibn Khallikān listed Al-Ḥajjāj among the poets. In his speeches and on other occasions he often recited verses particulary of rajaz metre. But they were mostly extracts. His best poetic expression, in the opinion of Mas'ūdī, was in the letter he addressed to Caliph 'Abdul Malik, in reply to his charge that he was shedding Muslim blood and squandering wealth. Al-Ḥajjāj wrote as if inspired;

1. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, P. 181.
2. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 154.
3. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, P. 181.
4. Abū-Isḥāq al-Qairawānī in ''Iqd', Vol. III, P. 220.

"If I do not seek your satisfaction, if I do not fear your dissatisfaction, let all my days be exposed to misfortune!
But for the Caliph, where can I find asylum for the expiation of the faults committed".
And then requesting for the favour of the Caliph, he wrote :

فقفني على حد الرضا لا أجوزه   مدى الدهر حتى يرجع الدر حالبه
وإلا فدعني والأمور فإنني   شفيق رفيق أحكمتني تجاربه

"Place me within the limits of your favour, and I shall not come out of it any more, so that the milk (favour) may come to the donner (milker). Then let me act for I am a faithful and devoted servant, whom experience has made wise"[1].

On another occasion when Caliph 'Abdul Malik disapproved of the extravagant expenses of Al-Ḥajjāj, he recommended to his servant the fear of God and protection of his subjects, Al-Ḥajjāj thanked his master for his advice and wrote this verse :

أتتني كتب للخليفة ضمنت   قراطيس تطوى كي تصان وتطبع
ومنها كتاب فيه لين وشدة   وذكر وفي الذكرى لذي اللب منفع

"I have received from the Caliph the covers which enclose written, rolled and sealed papers.
Amongst them is a letter where mildness, severity and advice are mixed; the counsels are profitable to a man gifted with intelligence"[2].

As Al-Ḥajjāj fell sick at the close of his life, he wrote to Caliph Al-Walīd the following verse :

إذا ما لقيت الله عني راضيا   فإن سرور النفس فيما هنالك
فحسبي حياة الله من كل ميت   وحسبي بقاء الله من كل هالك
لقد ذاق هذا الموت من كان قبلنا   ونحن نذوق الموت من بعد ذلك

"When I find Allah satisfied with me, my soul is full of joy.

1. Mas'ūdī, Mūrūjadh Dhahab, Vol. III, Pp. 141-142.
2. "Ansāb', P. 217.

The Eternity of God is enough for me. I don't place my hopes in the mortals.
Those who lived before us tasted death, and we shall taste it ourselves one day"[1].

These lines evidently show that there were moments when Al-Ḥajjāj expressed himself in spontaneous verse.

Al-Ḥajjāj's literary associations with the poets of the period were determined by their political attitude towards his administration. There were the poets who lauded his ingenuity and admired his constructive ability and wrote verse in appraisal of his works and deeds. They were admitted to Al-Ḥajjāj's literary meetings and rewarded generously. There were, on the other hand, the poets who were opposed to him and displeased him with their invectives and satires. We will sketch here, in brief, the dispositions of the most salient contemporary poets and their relations with Al-Ḥajjāj.

While Al-Akhṭal was the warbling charmer of Caliph 'Abdul Malik, Jarīr was the favourite poet and eloquent panegyrist of Al-Ḥajjāj. Al-Farazdaq, who formed with these two court poets a trio of the antipathetic and irreconciliable rivals, had a humour more sobre, more savage and more liberal. He sometimes praised the Caliph and sometimes Al-Ḥajjāj ; then he used to return to the adventurous life of the desert.

Jarīr ibn 'Aṭiyya, the panegyrist of Al-Ḥajjāj belonged to the family of Banū Kulaib, branch of the great tribe of Tamīm. He was born in Yamāma but stayed in Baṣra, more often than any one else and that is why he is often called al-Baṣrī. In his anxiety to win the favour of Al-Ḥajjāj, Jarīr went to Al-Ḥakam ibn Ayyūb ibn Abī-'Aqīl, the cousin of Al-Ḥajjāj and the chief of the police of Al-Baṣra, Jarīr recited to him verses in his praise and then made a request to be introduced to Al-Ḥajjāj[2]. Al-Ḥakam ibn Ayyūb was attracted by the charming recitals of Jarīr and wrote to Al-Ḥajjāj, "An Arab of the desert, a satan among the satans has come to visit me". Al-Ḥajjāj expressed his desire to see the poet ; Jarīr went to Wāsiṭ, where he was generously welcomed and rewarded with a robe of honour by Al-Ḥajjāj[3].

3. Ibn Khallikān, 'Wafayāt', Vol. I, P. 176.
1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Pp. 300 and 545.
'Aghānī', Vol. VI, P. 29.
2. 'Aghānī', Vol. VII, Pp. 42-43.

According to another tradition, reported by Mas'ūdī, the first interview of Jarīr and Al-Ḥajjāj was not so amicable. Jarīr went to Wāsiṭ, without seeking in advance the permission of Al-Ḥajjāj. He sought the hospitality of 'Anbasa ibn Sa'īd, the favourite of Al-Ḥajjāj. "Unfortunately", replied the courtier, when he saw Jarīr enter, "You have acted blindly. What has driven you to commit such a folly"? "It is a poem which I cannot keep in my boiling bosom and which I would like to recite to the Amīr", said Jarīr. 'Anbasa ibn Sa'id hid the poet in an enclosure and ordered him not to come out of it, till he had found an occasion for an interview. The favourite, soon after received a letter from Al-Ḥajjāj, inviting him to a meeting at the 'Al-Khaḍrā' (Green cupola). It was a very hot day and in order to cool the atmosphere, Al-Ḥajjāj had ordered a large quantity of water to be poured on the earth and it formed a pool of water at the foot of the stage. When 'Anbasa entered, he saw Al-Ḥajjāj seated on his large sofa. an empty chair was kept beside him. "I sat on the this chair", says 'Anbasa and Al-Ḥajjāj turned towards me. When I saw him happy and in a good humour, I said to him, "May God protect the Amīr ! A poet of Arab origin has composed a poem in your praise. But as he holds a very high opinion of his own works, he has found it convenient to enter the city without your permission, in order to see you". "Who is he" ? asked Al-Ḥajjāj. "He is ibn Al-Khatofā", said 'Anbasa. "Where is he" ? said Al-Ḥajjāj. He is in my house". Al-Ḥajjāj, thereupon ordered the servants to follow 'Anbasa to his house and bring Jarīr from his hide-out. The servants soon returned, conducting the poet by his shoulders. They pushed him into the room with such a violence that he fell on his face, in the water. When he rose shaking his clothes, like a drenched chicken fluttering its feathers, Al-Ḥajjāj said to him, "Let us see, what has made you come to us without permission, you unfortunate one" ! "May God protect the Amīr" ! said the poet. "I composed a poem without equal and it boiled in my interior. I wanted to recite it to you. That is the reason, why I have come to you". Al-Ḥajjāj was pleased at the frank reply of the poet and ordered him to recite the poem. Jarīr then glorified the works and deeds of Al-Ḥajjāj in an eulogy.

You have been relieved of the demons of 'Irāq; humiliated, they have bowed their heads in shame.
They said, you will never concur with us, O Amīr! You who abided by the religious faith and conformed to the Qur'ān. Their crafts are in vain, when they plot to close a door on you, you open another on them.
Men who were advancing in age and losing sight have seen the grey hair of their beards, painted red.
When the cord hangs round the neck of a rebel, he knows that his end is close.
For it is impossible to force back your sword, when it is hurled in the sheath (skin cover) which covers the lung. Don't you see your vanguards pitching their tents in the vast regions of China?
You have faced every watchful enemy and dreadful man ranged in battle, clad in armour and the foe has disappeared"[1].
The reward of this eulogy, which glorified the political and military career of Al-Ḥajjāj, was a young girl, white like a column beautifully sized, sent to Al-Ḥajjāj by the chief of Police of Yamāma[2].

Al-Ḥajjāj, called upon Jarīr, one night to defend himself against the bitter attacks of the contemporay poets, "Answer to to the wish of the Amīr", said the messengers to Jarīr, "I am going to dress myself", replied the frightened poet. "No, by God"! they said. "The Amīr has ordered us to conduct you in the dress in which we find you". Jarīr followed them, dressed in a big tunic and a cloak of yellow stuff. One of the messengers said to the trembling poet, "Don't be afraid of anything. The Amīr has only invited you to talk to him". When Al-Ḥajjāj saw the poet, he said, "Come, O enemy of God! Why do you insult men? Why do you cause them harm"? "May God accept my life as ransom for the Amīr"! said Jarīr. "I am not doing any harm to the people, it is they in fact who hurt me and I only give them back". And then putting a question he asked, "What is there between me and Ghassān ibn D͟huhail Al-Ba'īt͟h and Al-Farazdaq and Al-Akhṭal and At-Taimī"? "I don't know", replied Al-Ḥajjāj. "I will tell the Amīr", said the poet. And Jarīr cited numerous extracts of satires in which these poets had disgraced him and also the other satires in which he had equally

1. Jarīr, 'Dīwān', Vol. I, Pp. 8-9.
2. 'Aghānī', Vol, VII, P. 70.
Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 301.

reparteed their attacks. This meeting lasted till dawn, when Jarīr took leave of Al-Ḥajjāj and the latter uttered, "May God curse this Arab of the desert, he is a wicked sly"[1] ! Al-Ḥajjāj declared to Jarīr one day that he was not rich enough to reward him to his merits. He, therefore, sent him to the court of Caliph 'Abdul Malik, with a letter of recommendation. But the Caliph did not desire to see Jarīr, as he belonged to the race of Muḍar, which had espoused the cause of Ibn az-Zubair. The Caliph equally excluded Jarīr for his unreserved praise of Al-Ḥajjāj. "You are the poet of Al-Ḥajjāj", said he coldly to the poet and he reminded him of his famous verse, "Who then stops among men, the advance of hypocrisy; who resembles Al-Ḥajjāj in fury of attack" ? The Caliph was jealous and it was only after repeated requests of Muḥammed who was charged by his father to introduce Jarīr to the Caliph that 'Abdul Malik permitted the poet in his good graces. Once admitted before the Prince of the Believers, Jarīr praised the Caliph as he had praised Al-Ḥajjāj and was generously rewarded[2].

Al-Farazdaq also glorified Al-Ḥajjāj in many of his poems. Aghānī[3], presents to us the two poets, Jarīr and Al-Farazdaq competing before Al-Ḥajjāj in a bid to out-do each other in showering praises on him. Jarīr and Al-Farazdaq equally enjoyed presents from Al-Ḥajjāj. Al-Farazdaq had married a woman called Ḥadrā', without having the means to pay the nuptial presents. At the instance of 'Anbasa ibn Sa'īd, Al-Ḥajjāj gave him hundred camels[4].

Al-Farazdaq commemorated the victory of Al-Ḥajjāj at Dair al-Jamājim in the following verse :

"Whilst the squadrons were separated by a dark cloud of dust as big as the Nile, the believers were praying and Al-Ḥajjāj prayed with them.

He who brings to life the dead in order to bring about victory has sent to Al-Ḥajjaj a powerful help ;

The help of the angels : he whom God lends their help (angels) remains the most firm in battle and always victorious.

While clashing with the unbelievers ; saw with them, Gabriel and

1. 'Aghānī', Vol. VII, P. 42.
2. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. I, Pp. 150-151.
'Aghānī', Vol. VII, Pp. 66-67.
3. 'Aghānī', Vol. IV, Pp. 53-54.
4. 'Aghānī', Vol. XIX, P. 18.

his companions as visible as a bird in the sky.
At the sight of their armies and their flags, the army of hypocrisy took to flight as a band of terrified ostriches ; the sharp blades of India passed over their heads as meteors in the sky ; they smashed the helmets"[1].

Al-Akhṭal about whom Caliph 'Abdul Malik said, "He is the poet of Banū Umayyah[2], was obliged to pay to Al-Ḥajjāj a small tribute. "Are you not going to see Al-Ḥajjāj"? asked the Caliph of the poet. "In his letters he refers to you". The poet, who could not afford to lose the favour of his patron replied that he preferred the favours and neighbourhood of the Caliph to the presents and rewards of his lieutenant for a donkey could not be equal to a horse of good breed. 'Abdul Malik appeared pleased at this reply of the poet and gave him 10,000 dirhems. He could not spare him to go to Al-Ḥajjāj and write in his praise. Al-Akhṭal, however, composed an eulogy and sent his son with the Qaṣīda to Al-Ḥajjāj[3].

Among the eulogists of Al-Ḥajjāj was the celebrated poetess, Lailā al-Akhyaliyya, daughter of 'Abdullāh. She equally came to offer her praise to Al-Ḥajjāj. Already advanced in age, she presented herself before Al-Ḥajjāj, sad and groaning like a stray she-camel. She complained to him about the exactions of a tax-collector of Yamāma who charged to levy the tenth, took all what he desired and reduced the people to misery. Al-Ḥajjāj ordered the Governor of Yamāma to dismiss the greedy employee and Lailā thanked Al-Ḥajjāj in the following verse :

اذا هبط الحجاجُ ارضا مريضة   تتبّع أقصى دائها فشفاها
شفاها من الداءِ العُضال الذى بها   غلامٌ اذا هزّ القناة سقاها
سقاها دماء المارقين وعَلّهَا   اذا جمحت يوما وخيف أذاها
اذا سمع الحجاج رزّ كتيبة   أعدّ لها قبل النزول قراها
أعدّ لها مصقولة فارسية   بأيدى رجالٍ يحلبون صراها
أحجاج لا تُعطِ العُصاة مناهم   ولا اللهُ يعطى للعُصاة مناها

"When Al-Ḥajjāj visits a sick land, he studies carefully the secret roots of illness and cures it.

1. Al-Farazdaq, 'Dīwān', P. 629.
2. 'Aghānī', Vol. VII, P. 181.
3. 'Aghānī', Vol. VII, P. 174.

And when the hero, who has cured this earth of its disease, brandishes the lance, he knows how to water it.
He waters it with the blood of the heretics the first time and still a second time, if their headstrong revolt makes him fear a damage.
When Al-Ḥajjāj hears the tumult of a detatchment of cavalry, he prepares for it his meal before the fight.
He prepares for it a fine lance of Fāris, carried by the hands which excel to satiate it.
O Al-Ḥajjāj ! don't fulfil the desires of the rebels, when God declines to satisfy them"[1].

Mas'ūdi[2] reports that Al-Ḥajjāj had a long interview with Lailā, when she was presented to him and recited one of the Qaṣīdas she had written on her old lover. Al-Ḥajjāj treated her like a princess and gave her hospitality at the house of one of his wives Hind, daughter of Asmā'[3];

But after one of these interviews Al-Ḥajjāj said to his chamberlain, "Go and cut her tongue" ! The chamberlain sent for a barber and went with him before Lailā. "Unfortunate" ! cried the stranger on seeing the scissors, "Do you know that the words of the Amīr have no other meaning than this ? Cut her tongue by giving her presents, by bounty ! Go back to your master and consult him anew". When he heard his chamberlain ask how he should interpret the orders he had received, Al-Ḥajjāj burst into wrath and was going to cut the tongue of the chamberlian, who had failed to understand him. Finally he brought Lailā, who recited this verse :

حجاج أنت الذى ما فوقه أحد   الا الخليفة والمستغفر الصمد
حجاج أنت سنان الحرب إن نهجت   وأنت للناس فى الداجى لنا تقد

"O Al-Ḥajjāj ! you have none superior to you except the Caliph and the Eternal whom we ask pardon.
O Al-Ḥajjāj ! you are the spearhead of war when it roars ; you are for men a light shining in the darkness" !

The Amīr wished to offer 500 ewes to the poetess. "O Amīr" ! shouted the poetess, "Change them into white she-camels. You are

1. 'Aghānī', Vol. XVI, P. 162.
2. 'Aghānī', Vol. X, P. 84.
Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 173.
3. Mas'ūdī, Vol. V, P. 324.

too generous to restrict here your bounty" ! Al-Ḥajjāj blushed and granted 500 white she-camel[1].

Among other eulogists of Al-Ḥajjāj was the poet Al-Ḥakam ibn 'Abdul-Asadī who was generously rewarded for his praises[2]. Abūan-Najm al-Faḍl ibn Qudāma al-Qālī, received a piece of land from Al-Ḥajjāj[3]. The poet 'Ubaid ibn Mauhab defended the military honour of Al-Ḥajjāj in his eulogy and said to the Governor of Mecca, Al-Ḥārith ibn Khālid, "Don't mention Al-Ḥajjāj, other than to speak good of him for though guilty, you will see his goodness[4] !

If Al-Ḥajjāj rewarded generously the poets who espoused his cause and supported his political proclivities, there were others who had the misfortune to displease him by their invectives and satires. We have already seen, that he was nicknamed 'Kulaib' by many of them :

"Has Kulaib forgotten the time of his lowliness when he taught the Sūrat of Kauthar ?
A loaf of bread which was offered to him appeared as small as the whirl of a spindle and another as big as the moon in its full glare"[5].

When Caliph 'Abdul Malik ordered Al-Ḥajjāj to dissolve his marriage with Umm Kulthūm at the instance of Khālid ibn Yazīd, a poet called Ja'far, brother of Ibn az-Zubair, wrote the following verse to mark the affront inflicted on the powerful Amīr :

وجدت امیر المؤمنین ابن یوسف حمیا من الامر الذی جئت تنکف

ونبئت أن قد قال لما نکحتها وجاءت به رسل تخب وتوجف

ستعلم انی قد أنفت لما جری ومثلك منه عمرك الله یؤنف

"O son of Yūsuf ! you found the Prince of the Believers burning with anger, because you turned down his order.
You complained when after your marriage with her, he communicated to you through the messengers, who arrived trotting and galloping on their horses ! You know that I blushed at what happened and by God ! a man like you must feel ashamed at it"[6] !

1. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. III, P. 355.
   'Aghānī', Vol. X, P. 81.
2. 'Aghānī', Vol. II, Pp. 158-159.
3. 'Aghānī', Vol. IX, P. 82.
4. 'Aghānī', Vol. III, Pp. 107-108 and 110.
5. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 290.
6. 'Aghānī', Vol. XIII, P. 107.

The poets who were pursued by Al-Hajjāj in their flights, satirised the chase on more than one occasion. Mālik ibn ar-Raib Al-Māzini said :

"What fruits, in your opinion, will the efforts of Al-Hajjāj bear after we have passed Hafir Ziyād ?

Without Banū Marwān the son of Yūsuf would be still one of the slaves of Iyād.

As at the period when a slave acknowledging his baseness, he frequented morning and evening the children of the villages"[1].

'Imrān ibn Hittān wrote the following verse after he had escaped Al-Hajjāj :

اسد علی وفی الحروب نعامة   فتخاء تنفر من صفير الصافر
هلا برزت الی غزالة فی الوغی   بل کان قلبك فی جناحی طائر

"Against me he is a lion but before the enemy he is a grey ostrich who takes to flight before the cries of a sparrow. Why did you not then march against Ghazāla during the war ? It is because your heart was between the two wings of a fearful bird"[2].

Among the poets who accompanied 'Abdur Rahmān ibn al-Ash'ath, and his army on their way to 'Irāq was the celebrated poet, A'sha Hamdān. Mounted on a camel which preceeded his chief, he recited the following verse to declaim the status of Al-Hajjāj and his supporters :

ان ثقیفا منهم الکذابان   کذابها الماضی وکذاب ثان
أمکن ربی من ثقیف همدان   یوما الی اللیل یسلی ما کان
أناسونا للکفور الفتان   حین طغی فی الکفر بعد الایمان
بالسید الغطریف عبد الرحمن   سار بجمع کالدبی من قحطان
ومن معد قد أتی ابن عدنان   بجحفل جم شدید الارنان
فقل لحجاج ولی الشیطان   یثبت لجمع مذحج وهمدان
فأنهم ساقوه کأس الذیفان   وملحقوه بقری ابن مروان

1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 290.
2. 'Aghānī', Vol. XVI, P. 155.
Tabarī, Vol. II, P. 1056.

"Indeed amongst Thaqīf, two imposters came (into the world)—the old who is dead and the new one who is still alive. May my master deliver Thaqīf to the hands of Hamdān for a day till the night, and Thaqīf will fall into oblivion ! We have armed ourselves to face the infidel and agitator, when he has abandoned religious faith for oppression and apostasy.

We are armed under the order of the master and prince 'Abdur Raḥmān, who is marching at the head of the troops of Qaḥṭān resembling a swarm of ants.

At the head of Ma'add ibn 'Adnān, who has led a noisy buzzing multitude (of soldiers).

Tell then Al-Ḥajjāj, the friend of Satan, to fight the army of Madhḥij and Hamdān.

They will make him drink the poisoned cup of death, they will overtake him even at the house of Marwān.

The poet ibn Ḥilizza al-Yashkurī, who also accompanied 'Abdur Raḥmān said,

نحن جلبنا الخيل من زرنجـــا   مالك يا حجاج منـــا منجا

لتبعجن بالرماح بعجـــا   اولتفرن وذاك انجــــا

"We have brought our cavalry from Zaranj ; you will have no rest against us, O Al-Ḥajjāj !

You will be ripped open by the blows of the lances, or you will take to flight. And this last road is the surest for you"[1].

At-Ṭufail ibn 'Āmir ibn Wathila, another poet said,

الا أبلغ الحجاج أن قد أظـــله   عذاب بأيدى المؤمنين مصيب

متى نهبط المصرين يهرب محمد   وليس بمنجى ابن اللعين هروب

"Announce to Al-Ḥajjāj that the hands of the Musalmāns hold suspended over his head a punishment from which he will have no escape.

When we alight in the two capitals, Muḥammed (son of Al-Ḥajjāj) will take to flight but flight will not save the son of the cursed"[2]

When Al-Ḥajjāj passed along the dead body of this poet on the battlefield, he replied to his verse thus ! "They knew well that you deserved more than us the misfortune you had wished for us. God

1. ''Ansāb', P. 329.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1066.

Who is great and powerful has granted it to you; moreover, He will torture you now in the other world"[1].

Wāsit did dot equally find any grace before the enemies of Al-Ḥajjāj nor before the satirical poets. Ibn al-Qirriyya, we have already seen expressed this pitiful verse for the founder:

"He has built it in a country which is not his and he will leave it to others than to his children"[2].

على واسط من ربها ألف لعنة　　وتسعة آلاف على اهل واسط
أيلتمس المعروف من اهل واسط　　وواسط مأوى كل علج ساقط

"Thousand curses may befall on Wāsit for its master and nine thousand maledictions on its inhabitants!

Can we expect any good from the people of Wāsit, when this town is the refuge of every barbarian and uncouth"[3]?

With a view to increase the strength of the cattle on the recommendation of a few peasants who approached Al-Ḥajjāj and complained at their ruin due to the civil wars, Al-Ḥajjāj forbade them to eat the cattle. At this proposal, a satiric poet composed this verse:

شكونا إليه خراب السواد　　فحرم فينا لحوم البقر
فكنا كمن قال من قبلنا　　أريها السهى وتريني القمر

"When we bewailed before Al-Ḥajjāj the ruin of 'Irāq, he prohibited us stupidly the meat of our cattle.

And so we have resembled the ancient who said, 'I will show her As-Suhā and she will show me the moon'"[4].

al-Farazdaq recited the following elegy on the death of Al-Ḥajjāj's son and brother Muhammed. The first verse appears to be a bitter irony.

أخ كان أغنى أيمن الارض كله　　وأغنى ابنه اهل العراقين أجمعا
جناحا عقاب فارقاه كلاهما　　ولو نزعا من غيره لتضعضعا

1. 'Ansāb', P. 346.
2. Balādhurī, 'Futūḥ', P. 29.
3. Yaqūt, Vol. IV, P. 887.
4. 'Aghānī', Vol. XV, P. 98—As-Suhā is the name of a star scarcely visible in the constellation of the Lesser Bear.

"He is a brother who had enriched all the south of the land (Yemen); he is a son who had enriched the two 'Irāqs entirely. The eagle has lost its wings; or else, if his wings were torn away from him, he would have fallen down"[1].

Al-Ḥajjāj pursued with inveterate hatred the poets who had been opposed to him and not received his pardon. Such poets took asylum either with Al-Ḥajjāj's enemies or preferred to remain away from their homes in some alien country. Ka'b ibn Ma'dān al-Ashqarī was the eulogist of Al-Muhallab and as seen had served as a messenger and praised the sons of Al-Muhallab after the latter's victory over the Azraqites. Al-Ḥajjāj not withstanding the valour of Al-Muhallab had the poet imprisoned and would have decapitated him, if the Caliph had not intervened[2].

'Imrān ibn Ḥiṭṭān as-Sadūsi went from place to place for fear of his invectives against Al-Ḥajjāj and then desperately settled in the neighbourhood of Kūfa, almost under the eyes of the Amīr. 'Imrān, soon discovered, was conducted to Al-Ḥajjāj and by his order was put to death, to the great discontent of the Caliph, who shouted on learning of the execution, "May God cut the two hands of Al-Ḥajjāj; I shall put him to death"[3]. A'sha Hamdān shared a no better fate. "Ah, well! said Al-Ḥajjāj when he was brought before him after the fall of 'Abdur Raḥmān. "Are you the author of these verses"? "Yes, the tribe of Thaqīf consists of two imposters; the old (Al-Mukhtār) and the new (Al-Ḥajjāj).
May God deliver Thaqīf to Hamdān"!
"What do you mean by these words: 'May God deliver Thaqif to Hamdān'? Now that God has delivered Hamdān to Thaqīf", said the Amīr. And then after he had made him recite one of his Qaṣīdas, he cut his head.

The case of Yazīd ibn al-Ḥakam, the Thaqīfite, is, however, very strange. Taking his credentials, when appointed Governor of Fāris, Yazīd went before the Amīr to take leave. The Amīr said to the poet, "Recite to me one of your poems", seeking only the occasion to reward him. But instead of praising Al-Ḥajjāj or Banū Umayyah, the poet had the misfortune to recite a poem in

1. Mubarrad, P. 293.
   'Aghānī', Vol. XIV, P. 89.
   Ibn Khallikān, Vol. I, P. 177.
2. 'Aghānī', Vol. XIII, P. 60.
3. 'Aghānī', Vol. XVI, P. 60.

which he had celebrated his own glory. "Long live my father who snatched from the sons of Chusros a white standard, fluttering like the wings of an eagle who flies"!

Al-Ḥajjāj burst into anger at these words. Yazīd withdrew without taking leave and the chamberlain of the Viceroy came immediately, asking him to return his credentials saying on behalf of his master. "What cost you better, the inheritance of your father or these credentials"? To which the poet replied, "Tell Al-Ḥajjāj, I have inherited glory and good deeds from my ancestor, but you have only received at she-goat from your father at Aṭ-Ṭā'if". Then Yazīd took asylum with Sulaimān who was an enemy of Al-Ḥajjāj in the royal house[1].

The poet 'Abdullāh ibn Al-Ḥajjāj Abu'l-Aqra' who had taken part in the revolts against the authority of the Caliph obtained pardon from 'Abdul Malik. Al-Ḥajjāj wrote to the Caliph and requested him to send the poet for due punishment. But 'Abdullāh ibn al-Ḥajjāj escaped the reprisals of the Amīr, for the Caliph pleased with the poets eulogies about his bounty, did not comply with the wishes of his servant[2]. Another poet who was persecuted by Al-Ḥajjāj for his satires against the Amīr, was Waḍḍāḥ ibn Ismā'īl[3].

Several poets, who had in the beginning satirised Al-Ḥajjāj, later sought his pardon and entered the list of his panegyrists. Such was Al-'Udail ibn al-Faraj al-'Ijlī. When Al-Ḥajjāj arrived in 'Irāq, Al-'Udail found refuge in flight, for fear of his vengeance. He went from tribe to tribe, always pursued by the secret agents of Al-Ḥajjāj while he said :

ودون يد الحجاج من أن تنالني   بساطٌ لأيدي اليعملات عريض

مهامهُ أشباهٌ كأن سرابها   مُلاءٌ بأيدي الغاسلات رحيض

"The hand of Al-Ḥajjāj is too short to reach me; there is between us an immense space for the flight of the quick camels.
There are boundless deserts where the fantastic mirage resembles a cloak washed by the hands of washer-women[4].

1. 'Aghānī', Vol. XI, P. 101.
2. 'Aghānī', Vol. XII, P. 32.
3. Abū Tammām, 'Ḥamāsa', Vol. II, Pp. 481-482.
4. 'Aghānī', Vol. XX, P. 12.
Ibn Qutaiba, 'She'rwa Sho'arā', P. 245.
Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 287.

When Al-'Udail appeared before Al-Ḥajjāj, the Amīr asked "What do you think about this verse : The hand of Al-Ḥajjāj is too short to reach me. What do you think of it now ? God is more powerful than you are". "I have not said that, O Amīr", said Al-'Udail, "Here is my verse", and then recited the following verse in his support !

فلو كنت في سلمى أجا وشعابها ... لكان لحجاج علي دليل

خليل أمير المؤمنين وسيفه ... لكل إمام مصطفى وخليل

بنى قبة الإسلام حتى كأنما ... هدى الناس من بعد الضلال رسول

"Though I be in the rugged lands of Salmā or Ajā, Al-Ḥajjāj will discover the place of my retreat.
He is the friend of the Prince of the Believers, he is his chosen sword dear to all the Imāms.
He has built the mosque of Islām ; such a prophet brings back men to the right path after they have strayed away".
Touched by this praise and as was his wont, Al-Ḥajjāj pardoned the poet[1].
Another poet, A'shā 'Abdullāh ibn Khārija, of the tribe of Rabī'a had composed an eulogy on Ibn al-Jārūd and had taken part in the revolts of 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn Muḥammed. Al-Ḥajjāj pardoned his deflections and the poet offered his apology in a Qaṣīda to the Amīr[2].

Among the other literary affiliations of Al-Ḥajjāj, we cannot help observing Al-Ḥajjāj's attempt at making a correct and effective reading of the holy Qur'ān. Driven by his desire to settle the disputes among the theologians and re-establish unity among the divines, Al-Ḥajjāj ordered a new edition of the holy Qur'ān. Al-Ḥajjāj, reports Ibn al-Athīr studied the text of Caliph 'Uthmān with care and marked predilection and then in order to facilitate the reading of the new edition and to define finally the text, he had recourse to the cleverness of his secretaries, who put distinctive marks on the words where the pronunciation could be doubtful. Al-Ḥajjāj gave the charge of this work to Yaḥyā ibn Ya'mur and Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and they marked the text with simple and double

1. Ibn Qutaiba, 'She'r wa Sho'arā', P. 245.
'Aghānī', XX, P. 13.
Abū-Tammām, 'Ḥamasa', Vol. II, P. 619.
2. 'Aghānī', Vol, XVI, P. 162.

diacritical marks (nuqāṭ) classified differently as it was deemed appropriate. For a time the people transcribed the Qur'ān with these orthographical marks but this did not prevent them from inserting their own marks[1]. Al-Ḥajjāj, therefore, in view of this new danger caused his edition of the holy book to be spread in the provinces and prohibited with severity the reading of the text of Ibn Mas'ūd. One day the son of Yūsuf shouted from the pulpit, "By God! If I order you to go out of this door and you get out of the other, I shall be free to shed your blood. You should know, therefore, that I shall cut off the necks of all those I find reading the text of Ibn Umm 'Abd (the son of the mother of a slave)"[2]. This was the name Al-Ḥajjāj attributed to Ibn Mas'ūd. Although, Al-Ḥajjāj's desire to prevent an incorrect reading of the holy book, was motivated by his political hope of uniting his country men under one banner and one book, one cannot help noticing the literary propensities of the man, who had equally discredited the use of local dialects in a move to unite them in a native use of the Arabic language. Al-Ḥajjāj's interests were more secular and objective.

1. Ibn Khallikān, 'Wafayāt al A'yān', Vol. I, P. 175.
2. Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 463.

X

AL-ḤAJJĀJ AS A MAN

In this chapter, we will study the physical and personal traits of Al-Ḥajjāj.

Weak and unappealing in appearance, Al-Ḥajjāj possessed a remarkable appetite for rich food He was a great organiser of banquets.

Al-Ḥajjāj was jealous and vindictive by nature; he was equally stern and severe towards his enemies but not relentlessly cruel. Al-Ḥajjāj was not a pious Muslim. But, he was also not a sceptic.

Al-Ḥajjāj possessed a solid human personality. He was a man of full personal courage, untiring effort and inveterate throughness. Al-Ḥajjāj was a great political force in Islām a soldier—a statesman, who pursued his object with singleness of purpose and retained it with a shrewd intellect and a massive constructive ability.

Al-Ḥajjāj died in 95 A.H. (714 A.D.).

Born with some natural deformities which left him constitutionally very weak, Al-Ḥajjāj did not possess a smart and appealing appearance. He was, we have seen, lean in body and solid in his legs; he had a flat head and sunken shoulders. He was a nyctalops and his courtiers attributed his infirmity to the continuous persual of his administrative book[1]. In order to embellish a little his discomfiting ugliness, Al-Ḥajjāj combed his hair carefully and dyed his hands and feet in some hue[2].

Notwithstanding his physical weakness, Al-Ḥajjāj had a remarkable appetite for rich food and an equal appetite for organising great banquets. "Every day", says Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi[3], "Al-Ḥajjāj invited the courtiers, particularly his dear Syrians to the royal feasts". "And every day", says Mubarrad[4], "he seated them

1. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Vol. III, Pp. 21-22.
   Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 871.
2. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Vol. III, P. 22.
3. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Vol. III, P. 7.
4. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 173.

at the thousand tables. At every table, there was the 'tharid' (soup), meat-bread and fresh-fish".

Al-Ḥajjāj personally feasted his guests. Carried in a litter, he went round each table, at which sat ten guests and observed how they were served. For his own service Al-Ḥajjāj had two cup-bearers; one for pouring honey and the other for milk[1]. The author of 'Iqd al-Farīd adds that Al-Ḥajjāj served ten kinds of dishes and that there was rice mixed with sugar. If the sugar was not served in time, Al-Ḥajjāj would order two hundred flogs to the forgetful and negligent servants and after such corrections, the latter never appeared in the banquet-hall without baskets of sugar under their arm-pits[2]. Al-Ḥajjāj catered to the favourite choices of his guests. He asked his companions one day who were seated around him that each one of them should write the favourite dish on a piece of paper supplied for the purpose and put in under his mat. When these papers were observed, says Qutaiba, the unanimous choice stood for dates and butter[3]. Al-Ḥajjāj evidently supplied it to his visitors.

Extreme in his habits of eating as he was, Al-Ḥajjāj occasionally enjoyed frightening his guests when they were seated at the richly displayed tables and thus put them temporarily out of their wits by his tragic humour. One day when he had several guests at his table and among them was Muḥammed Ibn 'Umair ibn 'Uṭārid, he turned towards the latter in the middle of the dinner and said "O Muḥammed! Do you remember when Qutaiba Ibn Muslim called you to my help on the day of Rastaqabadh. You said to him, 'I have neither a she-camel nor a he-camel'[4]. And then you made a similar request to God, imploring, 'O God, lend to Al-Ḥajjāj neither a she-camel nor a he-camel"! "Hold this man by the hand", ordered the Amīr to the guard, "Take his sword and cut his neck". And as Al-Ḥajjāj uttered these words, he turned round with a smile towards Ḥajjār ibn Abjar who guilty of a similar fault had felt a shiver through his body. In the meanwhile, the pastry-cook brought a big milk and butter cake baked in the oven. "Put it near Muḥmmed", said Al-Ḥajjāj, "for he likes milk-diet very much". And then to the man who held the

1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 173.
2. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Vol. III, P. 7.
3. Qutaiba, 'Uyūn al-Akhbār', Vol. III, P. 197.
4. Here is a matter for which I have no concern.

unfortunate guest, he said, "Guard, sheath his sword and go"[1]

Mas'ūdī[2] and Mubarrad[3] place Al-Ḥajjāj among men who have been voracious gluttons i.e. men like Caliph Mu'āwiayah ibn Abī Sufyān, 'Ubaidullāh ibn Ziyād and Caliph Sulaimān ibn 'Abdul Malik. "The greed of eating at the table", said Al-Ḥajjāj himself, "is more hideous than leprosy on the body"[4], with such a greedy appetite Al-Ḥajjāj no doubt did not observe fasts. In one of his country-side walks, he invited an Arab of the desert to share with him his meal. There is someone who is more generous to invite me than you are", said the Beduin. "I must help myself to this call (invitation)", "Who is he"? asked Al-Ḥajjāj. "It is God, (May He be blessed and exalted!). He has invited me to fast for I am on fast today", replied the Beduin. "Break your fast today, you may fast tomorrow"! asked Al-Ḥajjāj. "Does the Amīr guarantee me life tomorrow"? asked the blunt Beduin. "That I cannot do", replied Al-Ḥajjāj. "Then why do you ask me to exchange the present for an uncertain tomorrow"? "Because it is very pleasant to eat". "Yes, but God is neither pleased with your baker nor with your cook, for what he loves is moral health". "I have never had a more unfortunate day", replied Al-Ḥajjāj, irritated. "Take away this man from me", he ordered[5].

Al-Ḥajjāj loved honey very much. He wrote to the Governor of Fāris, "Send to me from Khullār (a district in Fāris) the honey of new bees in a pot which has not been put on the fire[6]. Al-Ḥajjāj loved soup dish very much. He observed, says Qutaiba in 'Uyūn al-Akhbār', and counted that Al-Ḥajjāj took eighty-four morsels, each eaten with a handful of fish-soup[7].

Al-Ḥajjāj did not take wine and refused it when he was offered. Being at the court of Damascus, one day Caliph Al-Walīd said to him, "Will you take wine"? "Prince of the Believers" replied Al-Ḥajjāj, "That what you allow is not forbidden but I have not permitted the inhabitants of my province to take wine and I fear

1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Pp. 173-174.
2. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, P. 184.
3. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Pp. 173-174.
4. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 524.
5. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. II, P. 106.
6. Qutaiba, ''Uyūn al-Akhbār', Vol. III, P. 197.
7. Qutaiba, ''Uyūn al-Akhbār', Ibid.

transgressing the precept of the faithful servant[1]. Besides. I do not wish to oppose what he has disallowed"[2].

Al-Ḥajjāj was a man of extreme virtues and vices. His character has been subject to severe observation. Among his vices, we may note some of his faults he admitted to the Caliph 'Abdul Malik. "Describe to me, then your traits", asked the Caliph one day. "Prince of the Believers", replied Al-Ḥajjāj, "Excuse me for them''. "No. I desire you to enumerate them to me", insisted the Caliph. "Ah, well! I am quarrelsome, jealous and rancorous", said Al-Ḥajjāj. "But you are then of Satan's race", said the Caliph. "Exactly", admitted Al-Ḥajjāj and becoming witty added, "when Satan sees me, he treats me like his old friend' [3].

"I have never seen any person like Al-Ḥajjāj", reports one of his contemporaries in 'Iqd al-Farīd'. He had the air of a perfidious man, spoke like a Khārijite and flared like a beast"[4]. "Al-Ḥajjāj had, in fact", reports the author of 'Aghānī', "a choleric, passionate and irascibly irritable temperament; a dismal character and it is reported that he scarcely laughed at all"[5]. Al-Ḥajjāj was, in fact, a dismal character, jealous and vindictive; irascible and invidious.

The two most notorious faults attributed to Al-Ḥajjāj are his cruelty and impiety. According to Mas'ūdī, Al-Ḥajjāj confessed himself, "that his great joy was to shed blood and to undertake things which no one had dared to do before him and no one had given him the example"[6]. And the author of "Iqd al-Farīd', reports this passage from one of Al-Ḥajjāj's sermons. "I have for my whip the sword, whose leather belt hangs round my neck and whose hilt is in my hand; its sharp blade will be the collar of those whom I take by surprise"[7]. Ibn Khallikān says, "It is not known and not possible to verify how many massacres Al-Ḥajjāj committed, how much blood he shed and how many tortures he prepetrated. It is said that Ziyād ibn Abīhi tried to imitate the Prince of the Believers

1. The Prophet Muḥammed.
2. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 323.
3. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Vol. III, P. 22.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 463.
4. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi', ' 'Iqd', Vol. III, P. 22.
5. 'Aghānī', Vol. II, P. 40.
6. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, P. 133.
7. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Vol. II, P. 188.

'Umar ibn al-Khattāb for the stability of his administration, for his energy and vigour, for the severity of his rule; but he went beyond imitation to the extent of surpassing the limits. Likewise Al-Ḥajjāj took him (Ziyād), it is said, for his model and he too killed and exterminated people[1].

Arab historians[2] put the number of persons that Al Ḥajjāj put to death without speaking of the soldiers who perished in the wars to a total number of 120,000 men. About the number of prisoners at the death of Al-Ḥajjāj, the disagreement is great among the historians. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi[3] says that there were 133,000 prisoners in his cells at his death, of whom none deserved death. "When he died", says Mas'ūdī[4], "his prisons contained 50,000 men and 30,000 women; 6,000 among them were entirely naked". Speaking of his tortures Mas'ūdī[5] says, "No room protected them against the sun during the summer, against rain or cold during the winter". Mas'ūdī adds the following anecdote: While going escorted to the Friday prayers, Al-Ḥajjāj heard some tumult and asked the reason. He was told that it was the prisoners who cried and lamented their sufferings. They complained specially of the heat in the infectious cells, which were suffocating. Al-Ḥajjāj turned towards them and said, "Remain precipitated in the fire of Hell and keep quiet". Reporting the mass executions stated to have been perpetrated by Al-Ḥajjāj, Ṭabarī[6] claims that Al-Ḥajjāj slaughtered 11,000 or even 120,000 to 130,000 men in Baṣra alone after the battle of Az-Zāwiya.

The number of persons killed by Al-Ḥajjāj and the atrocities attributed to him cannot in face of the unanimity of the historians be, however, accepted as true. These figures are, no doubt, a copy of each other and also an expression of general hostility prevailing against Al-Ḥajjāj during the Abbāssid period. Ṭabarī's account of the mass executions perpetrated by Al-Ḥajjāj is equally not consistent

1. Ibn Khallikān, 'Wafayāt al-A'yān', Vol. I, P. 174.
2. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1123.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. III, P. 2.
   Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj', Vol. III, P. 176.
   Yāqūt, 'Mu'jam', Vol. IV, 884.
3. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. P. 124 and Vol. III, P. 21.
4. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, P. 176.
5. Mas'ūdī, Ibid.
6. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1123.

with the old and general traditions of Balādhuri and Qutaiba. In Baṣra as in Kūfa, we have seen that Al-Ḥajjāj had a general pardon proclaimed and those who laid down their arms received security. Madā'inī's tradition in ''Ansāb al Ashrāf' unequivocally supports this measure of Al-Ḥajjāj. He writes, "When Al-Ḥajjāj had captured the supporters of 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn al-Ash'ath after his victory, Qutaiba ibn Muslim said,

أصلح الله الامير ان الله قد اعطاك ما تحبّ من الظفر فأعطه ما يحبُّ من العفو۔

"God bless the Amīr ! God has granted you victory and that is what you desired. And what He (God) seeks from you is pardon". When Caliph 'Abdul Malik received this news, he said,

لله درُّ قتيبة لقد أبلغ فی الموعظة ولقد احسن الحجاج فی القبول

"Qūtaiba is generous in offering this advice and Al-Ḥajjāj is superb in accepting it"[1] ! We cannot, therefore, in the light of these varying facts accept categorical figures about Al-Ḥajjāj's persecutions nor generalise statements to adjudge his tortures. What we can, at best, affirm from these accounts is that Al-Ḥajjāj pursued his enemies with inveterate fury and perpetrated severe punishments on them often verging on the point of barbaric cruelty. Caliph 'Abdūl Malik had to remonstrate him on a number of occasions and instruct him to be moderate and sparing towards them. But there were a number of occasions when he himself showed his clemency.

The famous logician and scholar 'Āmir ash-Sha'bī had taken part in the revolt of 'Abdur Raḥmān al-Ash'ath. Conducted before Al-Ḥajjāj ; he said,

أيها الأمير ان الناس قد أمرونی ان أعتذر اليك بغير ما يعلم الله انه الحق وايم الله لا أقول فی هذا المقام الا حقا قد والله سودنا عليك وحرضنا وجهدنا عليك كل جهد فلما آلونا فما كنا بالاقوياء الفجرة ولا الاتقياء البررة ولقد نصرك الله علينا وأظفرك بنا فان سطوت فبذنوبنا وما جرت إليه أيدينا وإن عفوت عنا فبحلمك وبعد الحجة لك علينا۔

1. ''Ansāb al-Ashrāf', P. 193.

"O Amīr ! I have been advised to seek your pardon on an excuse which God alone knows is not based on truth, for I do not want to speak a word of lie. By God ! we revolted against you and incited people against you and fought with you. We were at this time neither lawless nor abiding the law. Now God has accorded you victory over us. If you treat us badly, it will be in lieu of our sins and crimes and if you overlook our faults, it will be obliging us. You have all authority over us". Al-Ḥajjāj, who was unmistakably pleased with Ash-Sha'bī's frankness said,

أنت والله أحب الي قولا ممن يدخل علينا يقطر سيفه من دمائنا ثم يقول مافعلت ولا شهدت قد أمنت عندنا يا شعبي فانصرف

"I am far more pleased with your talk than with a person who when brought in my presence professes impunity, while holding in his hand a sword soaked in our blood, I will not harm you. You are granted security". And then after a pause Al-Ḥajjāj asked, "But tell me O Sha'bī, how did you find the people after us" ? To which Ash-Sha'bī said, "God bless the Amīr ! After you we remained awake, fearful and terror-stricken. Fast friends deserted us and there was no Amīr better than you". Al-Ḥajjāj, thereafter allowed 'Amīr ash-Sha'bī to go. He was evidently pleased with his confession and pardoned him[1].

Al-Ḥajjāj usually spared the accused who quoted in their defence text of the holy Qur'ān[1], Sometimes he took pity on those, who made him laugh by a clever, spiritual or pleasing reply. "When Al-Ḥajjāj laughed", says Mubarrad, "he was about to pardon"[2]. One day a Ḥarūrite woman was brought to him. Al-Ḥajjāj consulted his companions who were agreed that she should be put to death. When this woman heard the sentence, she began to smile. "Why do you smile" ? asked Al-Ḥajjāj. "O Al-Ḥajjāj ! It is because the viziers of Pharaoh, your brother, were better than yours. When Pharaoh asked their advice whether Moses should be killed, 'Grant him a delay as well as to his brother', they replied. These on the contrary, hastened my death".

1. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd', Vol. III, Pp. 24-25.
   Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1112.
   'Aghānī', Vol. IX, P. 169.
2. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. I, P. 185.
3. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 172-173.

Al-Ḥajjāj began to laugh and granted liberty to the heretic woman[1].

It was a solecism which saved the life of Kuthayyir ibn Abī-Kuthayyir. "What is your name"? asked Al-Ḥajjāj. "Ibn Abā-Kuthayyir (instead of ibn Abī-Kuthayyir)", said the accused. Al-Ḥajjāj, who had the gift of ready speech, had asked the prisoners to learn how to express themselves with elegance and correction. When he heard a mistake so gross, he shouted, "Go away! May God curse you and he[2], who has sent you"[3]! Al-Ḥajjāj equally pardoned those who attracted the Amīr by their eloquence. "By God"! said a Khārijite to the companions whom the Amīr had ordered to cut his neck. "If we are noted for the number of sins, you are distinguished for the generosity of your pardon". "Shame on the mute-dead bodies, who stand around me", shouted Al-Ḥajjāj to his officers. "None of you has known how to find such a nice word"[4]. And he granted life to the accused.

Sometimes Al-Ḥajjāj accorded pardon to the repentant, to the penitent[5] and also to the courageous. He had ordered his lieutenant of Yamāma to send to him a terrible brigand called Jaḥdar ibn Rabī'a al-'Uklī. He was a brave warrior, a frightful champion, a depredator and a poet. Al-Ḥajjāj promised to spare the life of this malefactor, on the condition that he would kill a big and strong lion that they had captured in the district of Kaskar. Jaḥdar with feet tied, his right arm bound to his neck attacked the beast with the sword. He succeeded in striking him fatally, whereupon Al-Ḥajjāj shouted in joy, "Allah Akbar" and not only did he set Jaḥdar free but left him the choice to return to Yamāma or stay in his service. The brigand chose the latter course and was showered with presents by Al-Ḥajjāj[6].

Al-Ḥajjāj was also accessible to the sentiments of pity. Caliph 'Abdul Malik had ordered him to kill Aslam ibn 'Abdul Bakrī. When the accused appeared before Al-Ḥajjāj, he reminded him of this precept of the Qur'ān, "O You, who hath believed! If a perverted man brings to you news, find first if it is true, etc"[7] and

1. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. I, Pp. 184-185.
2. The Prefect of Baṣra, Al-Ḥakam ibn Ayyūb, ''Iqd', Vol. III, P. 221.
3. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Ibid.
4. Ibn 'Abd Rabbih', ''Iqd', Vol. I, P. 184.
5. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. I, P. 177.
   'Aghānī', Vol. XVI, Pp. 41, 44 and 45.
6. Ibn Shākir, 'Uyūn', P. 32.
7. Qur'ān, XLIX. 6.

he protested his innocence. Then he brought before Al-Ḥajjāj twenty four persons, of whom he was the only support. One of them declared that she was his mother, the other that she was his aunt, the third that she was his wife and the fourth that she was his daughter, and so on. Amongst the last, Al-Ḥajjāj noticed a little girl, who was hardly ten years old. "What is your relation with this man"? asked Al-Ḥajjāj. "I am his daughter (May God protect the Amīr")! and she recited these beseeching verses :

احجاج لم تشهد مقام بناته ... وعماته يندبنه الليل اجمعا
احجاج لم تقتل به ان قتلته ... ثمانا وعشرا او اثنتين واربعا
احجاج من هذا يقوم مقامه ... علينا فمهلا ان تزدنا تضعضعا
احجاج اما ان تجود بنعمة ... علينا واما ان تقتلنا معا

"O Al-Ḥajjāj! Have you considered what will be the plight of his daughters and aunts, who will weep for him the whole night? O Al-Ḥajjāj! How many persons will you cause to perish by killing him? Eight, ten, two and four.
O Al-Ḥajjāj! who will take his place to support us?
Be indulgent, and don't add to our distress!
O Al-Ḥajjāj! Either grant us generously his grace or unite us with him in death"! Al-Hajjāj was moved. "I swear", said he, "I will never treat you with cruelty and not add to your distress".

والله لا أعنت الدهر عليكن ولا زدتكن تضعضعا.

He wrote a letter to the Caliph narrating to him this sight and obtained mercy for the accused[1].

Al-Ḥajjaj was, in fact, not inexorable in his punishments. He has to his credit many noble and magnanimous actions which show that inspite of his irascible and bizarre temper, he was relenting chance to offer their repentance and when they failed to give some sincere excuse for their seditious activities or proved adamant in their hostile convictions, he ordered them to be executed. Such was the case with Sa'īd ibn Jubair.

Sa'īd ibn Jubair a freed black slave (negro) of Banū Wāliba, branch of Banū Asad, was one of the men, who in his time was the best interpreter of the Qur'ān. He had formerly been sent by

1. Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, Pp. 462-463.

Al-Ḥajjāj to liquidate the forces of 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn al-Ash'ath and he was even charged, it is said, to bring to obedience the rebellious general. But yielding to the promises and threats, he joined the party of revolt. He appeared at last before Al-Ḥajjāj, who interrogated him. "O Sa'īd, what had made you revolt against me"? "May God protect the Amīr", said Sa'īd, "I am one of those Muslims who soon commit sins and soon make amends". This reply calmed the son of Yūsuf and brightened his forehead. Sa'īd drew a good omen from this beginning. Then he answered a new question from Al-Ḥajjāj. "I was tied by an oath to 'Abdūr Raḥmān ibn Muḥammed ibn al-Ash'ath", he replied. "At his declaration the Amīr burst in fury and he was for a moment a prey of his agitation so furious that one of the extiemities of his coat fell down from his shoulder. "O Sa'īd ! he shouted. "When I arrived in Mecca and killed ibn az-Zubair, did I not receive the oath of loyalty from the inhabitants of this town and your oath to the Prince of the Believers ? "Assuredly". "Then when I came to Kūfa to govern 'Irāq and I got renewed the oath of loyalty in favour of the Prince of the Believers, did I not receive your oath a second time"? "It is true", replied Sa'īd. "You have perjured your oath twice to the Prince of the Believers and you keep the only oath given to a weaver the son a weaver"[1].

According to Mubarrad, Al-Ḥajjāj also had the following conversation with Sa'īd ibn Jubair. "When I came to Kūfa, where only men of pure Arab race lived, didn't I creat you Imām"? It is true", replied Sa'īd. "Then did I not appoint you Qāḍī? And as the inhabitants of Kūfa protested saying that this charge should be conferred only on the Arabs, didn't I order Abū Burdah, whom I appointed in your place not to solve any conflict abruptly, and without consulting you"? "It is true", replied Sa'īd. "Then didn't I put you amongst the number of my night attendants, when the rest were chosen from the chiefs of the Aiabs"? "It is is true". "Ḍidn't I give you 100,000 dirhems for distribution to the poor? And then, didn't I ask you to account for the use you had made of the amount". "It is right", replied Sa'īd. "Why, then, did you take up arms against me"? And Sa'īd replied as we have said, "I was bound by an oath to 'Abdur Rahmān ibn Muḥmmed in

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1264.
Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 459.

al-Ash'ath"[1]. The end of this conversation was tragic. Al-Ḥajjāj asked his name, to which Sa'id replied, "My name is Sa'īd ibn Jubair" (Lucky son of a bonesetter). "No", replied Al-Ḥajjāj. "Your name is Shaqī ibn Kusair, (Miserable son of a breaker)". "My father knew my name better than you do". "What do you think of the Caliphs"? asked Al-Ḥajjāj changing the topic. "You are not their mandatory". "Choose the manner of death by which you like to perish". "Choose it for yourself, vile! Know it well that whatever be the death that you inflict on me today, you will have the same in the other world". At the signal from the Amīr, Sa'īd was conducted to the torture. He went away laughing. Al-Ḥajjāj ordered him to be brought back and asked what made him laugh. Sa'īd replied, "I admire your audacity against God and the grace of God towards you", And Al-Ḥajjāj ordered him to be executed. Turning his face against the earth, Sa'īd pronounced these words: "I confess that there is no god but God: that He has no equal; that Muhmmed is His servant and messenger, and that Al-Ḥajjāj is not a Musalmān". Then he added, "God, don't allow Al-Ḥajjāj to order another death after me", and he was beheaded[2]. It is clear from the interrogation reported above, that Sa'īd ibn Jubair had committed a real mistake towards Al-Ḥajjāj and had ill-paid his favours. Sa'īd's principal excuse almost the only one remarked by Ṭabarī is, "they used violence against me"[3], said he in one of his responses.

According to a tradition reported by the Arab chronicles[1] Al-Ḥajjāj showed a strange agitation soon after the death of Sa'īd. In his trouble, he began crying like a mad man. "Our chains! Our chains"! Those who surrounded him, thinking that he was asking those of Sa'īd, cut the two feet of the dead body to the height of the ankles and took the chains which they carried to Al-Ḥajjāj. At night Al-Ḥajjāj awoke frightfully at the sight of his victim, who held the covers, took him by the neck, saying in a strong voice, "Enemy of God! Why have you killed me"? To which Al-Ḥajjāj

1. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', Pp. 285-286.
2. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, Pp. 173-174.
   Ibn al-Athīr, Vol. IV, P. 459.
3. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, P. 1264
4. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 1265-1266.
   Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Ibid.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV, P. 459.

replied, "What is there between me and Sa'īd ibn Jubair"[1]? "What is there between me and Sa'īd ibn Jubair"? This tradition has no logical context and appears to be given in support of Sa'īd's subversion.

We can in the light of the above facts affirm with Adh-Dhahabī[2] that Al-Ḥajjāj was the best of men for the submissive subjects, he was the most terrible for the recalcitrants". To the penitent, he accorded pardon, to the obdurate, the gallows. There was no half-way house with Al-Ḥajjāj.

When we examine Al-Ḥajjāj's religious beliefs we see that his principal cult had for its object after God, the ruling Caliph. And in this political devotion to the ruling dynasty, Al-Ḥajjāj, disparaged the authority of the Prophet and subordinated it to that of his master. He attributed to the Caliph the power of opening the doors of Paradise. He used to say, "Certainly, the lieutenant of God on the earth is greater than his missionary towards men"[3]. And in a letter addressed to Caliph 'Abdul Malik, he declared, that the heaven and the earth could not exist without the grace of the caliphate; that the caliph in divine estimation was superior to the cherubims, the Prophets and the Apostles". And he defended his theological thesis by saying, "That God created Adam with His own hands, obliged the angels to worship him, gave him His Paradise to live in, then He made him descend on the earth where He appointed him His lieutenant, where He sent him as ambassadors, His angels"[4].

These religious opinions of Al-Ḥajjāj increased the fold of his enemies, many of whom refused to be present at the religious offices over which he presided in the great mosque; others while joining him prayed in their own way[5]. The inhabitants of 'Irāq refused to accompany him on a pilgrimage to Mecca. It is not known in which year[6]. A great number among them considered him an infidel and accused him of demolishing stone by stone, the edifice of Islām[7]. He is qualified as a Ḥarūrite and Azraqite by others[8]. Still others considered him impious and irreligious. "He

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1265-1266.
2. Adh Dhahabī, 'Tārīkh al-Islām', Vol. I, P. 652.
3. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol III, P. 23.
4. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. III, P. 23.
5. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. III, Pp. 22-23.
6. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 291.
7. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. III, P. 23.
8. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. III, P. 22.

is the most haughty and impious of all", says Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi[1]. One day a Khārijite woman was brought before Al-Ḥajjāj. She stood erect in his presence, without lifting up her eyes. "Look at the Amīr", said Yazīd ibn Abī-Muslim to her. "I feel ashamed", she replied, "to look upon one on whom God turns away His eyes"[2].

Al-Ḥajjāj was, in fact, not a pious Muslim. He was equally not an infidel nor a sceptic. He was a rationalist who showed his Muslim faith in many circumstances of his life. He believed in the prophetic mission of the Prophet and in the truth of his doctrines. He quoted unreservedly from the holy book. He revised the punctuation marks of the holy text; set at liberty the accused who referred to the holy authority in defence of their plea and preferred to appoint a Muslim teacher for his son. He ordered a new construction of the holy Ka'ba, built many a new mosque and respected men of faith, who acknowledged the Umayyad Caliph as their overlord. Where his political interests were concerned, Al-Ḥajjāj subordinated everything to policy. And since piety was never his motive, he cancelled the inviolability of the holy places with the conviction, that his opponents misused their sanctuary and used it for seditious activities against the state. It was with such a purpose in view that he exposed the Ka'ba to danger and punished the old companions of the Prophet. But Al-Ḥajjāj bore no hatred for Islām. He desired religion to absolve itself of its political proclivities. In this move he was far in advance of his times.

An equitable appreciation of Al-Ḥajjāj's works and personality must not prevent us from acclaiming with interest some of his remarkable virtues and exonerate him from the wrath of his enemies. Such was also the opinion of his famous compatriot the Thaqīfite 'Abdul Wahhāb. "When you speak of Al-Ḥajjāj", said he, "You only mention that what he did bad"[3].

Al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf had in fact a troublesome life but midst a period of storm and stress, he stood unshaken in his convictions like a man who was determined from the very beginning to win his way through a struggle at once long and obstinate. Al-Ḥajjāj's sole policy was determined by his singleness of purpose—his loyalty

1. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. III, Pp. 23-24.
2. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 346.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. II, P. 143.
3. Yāqūt, 'Mu'jam', Vol. IV, P. 886.

and devotion to the Umayyad dynasty. "Never was there a servant more devoted than was Al-Ḥajjāj to the family of Marwan"[1], said Caliph Al-Manṣūr. Having once offered his services to the ruling house, Al-Ḥajjāj recognised no superior than the Caliph and it was on this basis that he stood for the integrity of the Muslim state, for justice, for public order and well-being of the citizens and a loyalty no less equal to his own.

A persistent and relentless fighter as he was, Al-Ḥajjaj found no means inapt for securing his end. He did not let his courage fail under any circumstances He was equally not cowed down by superstition or tradition. Throughout his life, he pressed forward incessantly and directed the whole of his energy towards his object of establishing his master's authority over Arabia and consolidating his strength.

Full of courage and conviction, Al-Ḥajjāj possessed an abounding capacity to pull himself out of any impasse. He had an equal confidence in his strategy and judgment and, however, unpalatable or insecure the task before him, he always felt safe to grapple with the toughest problems and steer clear of all difficulties. With his tact, firmness and purposeful determination, Al-Ḥajjāj assumed the role of leadership from the very beginning and as always remained a master of solid triumphs and constructive feats, reducing mighty threats of his enemies to mute inactivity and confounding them with his giant strength.

By profession a teacher and soldier, by training and habit, Al-Ḥajjāj remained an inveterate believer in discipline and thoroughness and above all a great organiser, qualities which evoked ready response from his master. With his officials and subordinates, Al-Ḥajjāj always remained strict and stern, even with the highly and like a hard task-master remonstrated them for their inabilities. Nevertheless, he confided in them his trust and offered them a liberal role to prove their mettle but never allowed their reins to slip from his hands. He knew how to break them or make them feel his curb, when they failed to reconcile themselves to his instructions or reared their heads against his authority. No doubt, Al-Ḥajjāj gave his relations a large share in the enjoyment of his power but he never favoured them to the point of being political misfits. Vigilant of the interests of his master, mindful of the

1. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, Pp. 95-96.

welfare of those whom he commanded, Al-Ḥajjāj instilled faith and confidence in his ranks and demanded an unstinted devotion. Granted by God with the rare quality of personal courage and incalculable political sagacity, his subordinates could not find a better example of selfless devotion and service and unremitting labours; a man who could force his heart, nerve and sinew into untiring effort; a man who made it incumbent on others to perform their duty—regardless of their own interests and thereby uniting them to the interests of the state.

Al-Ḥajjāj possessed a superiority of intellect, a massive constructive ability and a fine perception to choose the rightful persons and use them to better purposes. He kept a watch upon those whom he might need and place them in his service at the opportune moment. Once selected, Al-Ḥajjāj made trials of their strength and if they proved inagile or weak for the task before them, he did not take long in deposing them. Nevertheless, he felt jealous of those who outstripped him or frowned upon him. Their sentiments found expression particularly in Khālid ibn Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiyah, Yazīd ibn Muhallab and 'Abdur Raḥmān ibn al-Ash'ath.

Al-Ḥajjāj was extremely stern towards those who committed faults, however, light. He was equally severe to the administrators who disposed of the state revenues negligently or failed to give an honest account of them. Having claimed from Salīm ibn Ṣāliḥ an enormous sum that this man could not pay in time, Al-Ḥajjāj sold his goods, devastated his farm and dispersed his family; then he sold Salīm as a slave to a notable of Kūfa[1]. When Al-Muhallab, was unable to pay the amount of money due to him, Al-Ḥajjāj detained him for a year and allowed him to take up his post as Governor of Khurāsān when he was able to clear his accounts.

Al-Ḥajjāj made and retained his word with honour and saw that his subordinates did not betray his faith. This tradition remained reputed even after his death. When Rutabīl refused to pay his stipulated tribute to Caliph Sulaimān Ibn 'Abdul Malik and again to Yazīd ibn 'Abdul Malik (the tribute that he had so regularly paid to Al-Ḥajjāj), he asked the 'amils' who came to collect it, "What has become of the people who used to come empty bellied, faces darkened by the sun, their sandles of palm leaves"? The

1. 'Aghānī', Vol. V. P. 163.

reply was, "They have passed away". "They kept their word better than you and were more brave though you are a little better looking", said Rutabīl. "And one of the collectors asked, "What has come over thee ? Thou did'st pay tribute to Al-Hajjāj and dost not to pay us". And Rutabīl answered, "Al-Hajjāj was a man who did not consider what he spent, so long as he got what he wanted, even though not a dirhem was returned to him. But you do not spend a dirhem without wanting them to return ten in its place". And thereafter, he did not pay any tribute to any of the 'amīls' of the Umayyads or to Abū Muslim in Sijistān[1].

Al-Hajjāj was the most outspoken compatriot whose secret thoughts could never be distinguished from what he said openly. But he did not pamper people into obedience. He coerced them. He never spent his patience in repeated negotiations with his opponents. Advised to be moderate towards them, he said, he found no other way to reduce his enemies than by his sword. In this, there was perhaps no one who represented the old time and the heathen principle so much as he did. But Al-Hajjāj was not inspired by any hatred for Islām. He was bitterly opposed to the orthodox, who refused to recognise the authority of his master or seek the interests of the state. The terrible religious storm that Al-Hajjāj allayed, created a feeling of political solidarity in Islām.

As a political architect and organiser Al-Hajjāj took upon his shoulders the massive task of transforming the politically broken land into an integral unit. While as a soldier, he fought for his master's standard, as a virtuous patriot and statesman, his achievements were far more superior for he established the political unity of Arabia and created a feeling of political consciousness in the people, on whose shoulders they expanded the arms of the Arab conquest in the East as well as in the West. Unfortunately, the people of Arabia did not at once accept Al-Hajjāj's purpose on its merits. They did not recognise the legitimacy of the existing rule and attempted to test it by the measure of the holy Qur'ān and their right to the caliphate and theocracy.

Al-Hajjāj was ambitious but not greedy for power. Throughout his life he evinced a remarkable acquiescence to his master's authority and never for an instance challenged it or overruled it. This sense of filial obedience, was no doubt inspired by Al-Hajjāj's

1. Balādhurī, "'Ansāb al-Ashrāf', Pp. 401-402.

desire to unify the political strength of his countrymen. This object he could realise only by preserving the status quo of the ruling dynasty which was the most powerful at the time he adopted a political career for himself. Had there been some master other than Caliph 'Abdul Malik but equally formidable, Al-Ḥajjāj, we are sure, would not have hesitated to offer his services to him.

Transporting our mind to the period broken in by incessant troubles and strifes and surveying Al-Ḥajjāj's troublesome career, one is emboldened to declare that Al-Ḥajjāj was a great political force in Islām and possessed a solid human personality. His motive was to found a national kingdom under his master, reduce the religious balkanisation of the state and consolidate its strength within its national frontiers. Within a short span of twenty-two years Al-Ḥajjāj had the good fortune to see his political dream realised. The wholesale and ruthless opposition offered to him compelled Al-Ḥajjāj to reduce his enemies by his sword.

Al-Ḥajjāj who subdued the whole of Arab kingdom for his master equally consolidated his strength by nationalising the states administrative machinery and making it independent of foreign influence by introducing Arabic language in the ministry of exchequer, by creating a purely Arabic coinage system and by increasing the agricultural prosperity of the land. Under Al-Ḥajjāj Arab armies received a fresh impetus. We can safely say that what Al-Ḥajjāj lost as a pious muslim, he gained as a political craftsman and a soldier-statesman.

Al-Ḥajjāj possessed a good conscience. Assessing his virtues as he assessed his vices, Al-Ḥajjāj wrote to Caliph Al-Walīd: "I enlivened my opinion; I laid to rest my personal desires; I brought closer the chief of the clan; I gave the charge of war to one who was resolute in such matters. I devolved the department of revenue on one who was abounding in honesty. I offered my enemy the chance to partake himself of my bounty and kindness; I used my sword in the extermination of evil; I rewarded the virtuous and the grateful. The suspect felt afraid of the severity of my punishment while the grateful held strong to the chance of reward offered to him[1]".

1. Qutaiba, 'Uyūn', Vol. I, P. 10.

The Death of Al-Ḥajājj

Al-Ḥajjāj died of cancer in the year 95 A.H. His last days were miserable and painful. A general feeling of joy and deliverance burst all over the country at his death. But with his end sounded the death knell of the Umayyad Caliphate. A period of decadence and disruption followed Al-Ḥajjāj's death as it had preceded his rise to power.

Al-Ḥajjāj died of cancer in the month of Ramaḍān in the year 95 A.H. (June 714 A.D.)[1]. His end was miserably painful and agonising, devoid of sleep and rest. Conscious of his end he had written to his lieutenant Qutaiba ibn Muslim in 94 A.H. (713 A.D.). I have considered my age and here I am already 53. We were both born in the same year and a man who has walked for fifty years towards his end (watering place) is well near reaching it[2]. The son of Yūsuf had, no doubt, felt the attacks of the cruel malady which put an end to his life.

Al-Ḥajjāj's personal physician whom he occasionally consulted was the famous Tiyādhūq (Theodocus). Furāt ibn Shuhnāthā who was a pupil of Tiyādhūq was also the physician of Al-Ḥajjāj. Tiyādhūq died in 90 A H. (709 A.D.)[3].

The prescriptions and the counsels of Tiyādhūq given to Al-Ḥajjāj did not lack interest. When Al-Ḥajjāj experienced tinkling irritation in the ears and migraine (sick or nervous) headache, this physician advised him to bathe his feet in hot water and oint them with balm. Tiyādhūq also gave Al-Ḥajjāj the following prescription. "Only marry young women; eat the meat of young beasts and which is well cooked, do not use medical drugs except when ill; do not eat fruits unless ripe; and chew well your food. After lunch you can have a sleep but after your meal at night do not go to bed before taking a walk, be it only hundred steps". Tiyādhūq also used to say to Al-Ḥajjāj : Four things account for the span of life, bathing with full stomach, seeing a woman when the stomach is overcharged; eating meat dried in the sun; taking

1. Ibn Qutaiba, 'Ma'ārif', P. 174.
   Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1217 and 1268.
   Ibn Khallikān, 'Wafayāt', Vol. I, P. 176.
2. ''Aghānī', Vol. XVIII, P. 119.
3. Mas'ūdī, 'Murūj adh Dhahab', Vol. III, Pp. 173-174.
   Ibn Khallikān, 'Wafayāt al-A'yān', Vol. I, P. 176.

cold water when fasting[1].

Tiyādhūq also cured Al-Ḥajjāj of a rare whim : The Governor had the habit of eating a kind of edible clay which was called "Sigillated earth". One day Al-Ḥajjāj asked Tiyādhūq what he should do to cure himself of this habit which was so detrimental to his health. "The will of a man like you". prescribed the physician. And it is said that Al-Ḥajjāj corrected himself[2].

Al-Ḥajjāj perhaps because he was a great eater complained towards the end of his life of a weak stomach and poor digestion. Tiyādhūq then prescribed Al-Ḥajjāj to chew the red skin of pistachio[3]. The physician of Al-Ḥajjāj, desirous to know exactly the nature of Al-Ḥajjāj's ailment took a piece of meat that he tied to a thread and introduced it in his oesophagus (gullet). After a time he took out the thread and found the nest of a worm which was eating it[4].

Besides the cancer of the stomach, Al-Ḥajjāj also suffered from a cold fever. Although chafing dishes full of burning charcoal were placed around his bed and put very close to him that they burnt the skin, Al-Ḥajjāj did not feel the heat. He complained of his suffering to Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri. The latter considering these as the chastisement of God said to him, "When I prevented you from attacking people you persisted". "O Al-Ḥasan" ! replied Al-Ḥajjāj, "I am not asking you to pray to God to grant me better days ; request Him only to hasten to take my soul and to put an end to my tortures". This complaint extracted tears from the compassionate visitor[5].

During his last illness Al-Ḥajjāj used to repeat the following verse of poet 'Ubaid ibn Sufyān al-'Uklī,

يارب قد حلف الاعداء واجتهدوا — ايمانهم انني من ساكني النار

ايحلفون على عمياء ويحهم — ماظنهم بعظيم العفو غفار

"O my God ! my enemies have sworn that I will be one of the inhabitants of Hell.

1. Ibn Qutaiba, 'Uyūn al-Akhbār', P. 217.
   Ibn Abī-'Usaibi'a, 'Kitāb al-Anbā', Pp. 121-123.
2. Ibn al-Qiftī, 'Tārīkh al-Ḥukamā', P. 108.
   Ibn Abī-'Uṣaibi'a, 'Kitāb al-Anbā', Pp. 121-123.
3. Ibn Abī 'Uṣaibi'a, 'Kitāb al-Anbā', P. 122.
4. Ibn Khallikān, 'Wafayāt', Vol. I, P. 176.
5. Ibn Khallikān, 'Wafayāt', Vol. I, P. 176.
   Ibn Shākir, 'Uyūn', P. 35.

Is it not due to their blindness that they swear? Unfortunately what opinion have they of the All Merciful, Who pardons all"! Al-Ḥajjāj wrote a letter to Caliph Al-Walīd informing him of his malady and at the end added;

اذا ما لقيت الله عنى راضيا فان سرور النفس فيما هنالك

فحسبى حياة الله من كل ميت وحسبى بقاء الله من كل هالك

لقد ذاق هذا الموت من كان قبلنا ونحن نذوق الموت من بعد ذلك

"When I find God satisfied with me, my soul is filled with joy. The eternity of God is sufficient for me. I do not place my hope in the living. Those who have lived before us have tasted death, and we will also taste it one day"[1].

Al-Ḥajjāj suffered terribly for fifteen days[2] before his death. He did not have any sleep or rest[3]. According to a tradition reported by Ibn Shākir a few moments before breathing his last, Al-Ḥajjāj said to an astrologer who was close to the head of his bed. "Don't you see a king passing away"? "I see a king whose name is Kulaib". "True by God"! said Al-Ḥajjāj; "Kulaib is the name that my mother gave me". "It is you. in fact", replied the astrologer. "However, I shall send you before me to the other world", added the patient and he had the fortune-teller beheaded immediately[4]. Al-Ḥajjāj expired soon after in the year 95 A.H. (714 A.D.)[5]. He had lived 54 Muslim years, a little less than 53 years by our calendar[6]. He was buried in his city of Wāsiṭ, where he had breathed his last. Like the inhabitants of At-Ṭā'if, who destroyed the tomb of Ibn az-Zubair at Mecca[7], the 'Iraqians demolished that of Al-Ḥajjāj at Wāsiṭ and directed there a course of water[8].

1. Ibn Khallikān, 'Wafayāt', Vol. I, P. 176.
2. Ibn Khallikān, Ibid.
3. Ibn Shākir, 'Uyūn', P. 35.
4. Ibn Shākir, 'Uyūn', P. 35.
5. Ibn Qutaiba, 'Ma'ārif', P. 174.
   Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1217 and 1268.
   Ibn Khallikān, Vol. I, P. 176.
6. Ahmad aḍ-Dīnawarī, 'Kitāb al-Akhbār aṭ-ṭiwāl', P 331.
   Ṭabarī, Ibid.
   Ibn Khallikān, Ibid.
7. Ibn Jubair, 'Rihla', P. 109.
8. Ibn Khallikān, 'Wafayāt', Vol. I, P. 177.

In his will, Al-Ḥajjāj once again affirmed his attachment to the ruling dynasty.

"It is the testament of Al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf ; he knows no obedience but to Al-Walīd ibn 'Abdul Malik ; it is in that he lives. and in it he dies, and in it he will resuscitate"[1].

A general feeling of joy and deliverance burst over all parts of the country at the death of Al-Ḥajjāj. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī prostrated himself against the earth to express to God his gratitude. "At last, O God", he said, "You have made him die! Let the traditions he established amongst us also die"[2] 'Umar ibn 'Abdul 'Azīz who requested God to let Al-Ḥajjāj die a natural death, so that his punishment be more painful in his future life, equally prostrated himself as a sign of gratitude[3]. There were people who cried in joy. Hind, daughter of Asmā' whom Al-Ḥajjāj had divorced, saw his dead body in the shroud and said, "O corpse wrapped in shroud! our hearts rejoice to see you lying dead. You have been the partner of the cursed Satan ; now that you are dead. the partner abandons you".

The poet Al-Farazdaq, one of the contemporaries of the Viceroy of 'Irāq, regretted his death, in one of his 'Qaṣīdas'. He said,

"The shepherd who imposed on men their religion ; struck with Indian blade the head of all the recalcitrants is dead.

The soldiers of the rear guard left in Transoxiana shout at his death. How unfortunate we are! The strength of our army is annihilated by the death of the man who re-affirmed our hearts in danger"[1].

No one could be more sad than Caliph Al-Walīd, at the loss of Al-Ḥajjāj. He publically expressed his grief, received the usual condolences and heard the funeral elegies of Al-Farazdaq and other poets. Ṭabarī relates to us the following incident which expresses the regret of the Caliph at the death of lhe Viceroy of 'Irāq. One day Caliph was very distracted. While washing his hands before breakfast. his valet who did not have the right to speak to him without permission went on pouring water and the

1. Ibn Shākir 'Uyūn', P. 38.
2. Ibn Khallikān, 'Wafayāt', P. 177.
3. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Vol. III, P. 25.
4. Al-Farazdaq, 'Dīwān', After Caliph Al-Walīd's death Al-Farazdaq wrote a satire on Al-Ḥajjāj.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Vol. III, Pp. 25-26.

Caliph was not washing the hands. "Are you asleep"? said at last Al-Walīd to the servant, while pouring water on his face. Then, raising his head and recovering from his absent mindedness said, "Do you know the news that I received last night"? "No", replied the valet. "Ah, well! Al-Ḥajjāj is dead". "We belong to God and we return to God", said the servant. "Keep quiet", replied the Caliph. "Do you think that your master was happy to hold a sweet-smelling apple in his hand"? "Assuredly", replied the servant[1].

In general, people were anxious to know what fate God had destined for Al-Ḥajjāj after death They were, agreed that the malediction of God weighed heavily on him and that he was amongst the condemned. A man swore to divorce his wife, if the son of Yūsuf was not a piece of burnt wood in Hell. But he was later very embarrassed to arrive at any absolute certainty. Hesitating between his conjugal duty and his oath, he went to consult a jurist Ibn Shabrama. This man said to him. "If Al-Ḥajjāj is not one of the inhabitants of Hell, you can commit adultery with impunity"[2]. Another person saw the Viceroy of 'Irāq in his dream and asked him about his fate. "As many as I killed, as many times God made me die", replied the vision. "And now I am waiting for the reward of those who followed the religion of the only God"[3]! Al-Ḥajjāj also appeared to Ḥassān Nabaṭeen who said to him "What had God done to you"? "Does it interest you"? replied Al-Ḥajjāj. "And I understand" added Ḥassān, "That after having received the stamp of the seal during his life, we will not escape his abuses after death"[4]. We cannot accept these traditions without reservation. Their purpose was either to disrepute Al-Ḥajjāj out of malice or seek vengeance for his exactions. But we cannot help feeling that there was a general feeling of relief at his death and there were very few men who really felt aggrieved for him.

While dying Al-Ḥajjāj, had confided the administration of the finance to his secretary Yazīd ibn Abī Muslim, to his own son 'Abdul Malik he confided the right of presiding over the public prayer and to Yazīd ibn Abī Kabsha the direction of war. Al-Walīd

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, P. 1272.
2. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. III, P. 22.
3. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. III, P. 25.
4. Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 286.

confirmed these choices of Al-Ḥajjāj and left in office all the commissioners of police appointed by him. Al-Walīd was so satisfied with the services of Yazīd ibn Muslim that he said,

ان الوليد هو الذى ولاه بعد موت الحجاج قال يوما: مثلى ومثل الحجاج
وابن أبى مسلم كرجل ضاع منه درهم فوجد دينارا

"I have appointed him Governor in place of Al-Ḥajjāj and I am like a man who has lost a dirhem and found a dīnār"[1]. Al-Walīd (I) did not long survive the son of Yūsuf. He died after eight months on the 15th of Jumādā in the year 96 A.H. (25th February 715 A.D.)[2].

Sulaimān ascended the throne the same day.[3] Although he left after him the reputation of a generous prince he perpetrated cruel punishments on the descendants of Al-Ḥajjāj as well as on Qutaiba ibn Muslim and Muḥammed ibn al-Qāsim, on the design that they had formerly planned together to exclude him from the throne in favour of 'Abdul-'Azīz son of Caliph Al-Walīd[1].

Yazīd ibn al-Muhallab was soon appointed Governor of 'Irāq (96 A.H.); Ṣāliḥ ibn 'Abdur Raḥmān who was empowered to levy taxes in this province received the mission of putting to torture the members of the family of Al-Ḥajjāj and make them perish With the help of 'Abdul Malik ibn al-Muhallab, Ṣāliḥ exercised the reprisals[5]. The wives and children of Al-Ḥajjāj who were then in Syria fell into the hands of Yazīd ibn al-Muhallab, the new Governor of 'Irāq. The commissioners appointed by the 'servant' of Banū Umayyah were dismissed. However, his posterity was not annihilated. Sulaimān in particular wanted to deprive the wealth it had accumulated[6].

The commissioner of the Police of Mecca, Khālid ibn

1. Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1267-1268.
   Ibn Qutaiba, 'Ma'ārif', P. 175.
   Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ''Iqd', Vol. III, P. 21.
   Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. IV. P. 462.
2. Ibn Qutaiba, 'Ma'ārif', P. 175.
3. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, P. 1281.
4. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 1274-1275.
5. Ṭabarī, Vol. II, Pp. 1282-1283.
   Mubarrad, 'Kāmil', P. 261.
6. Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. V, Pp. 41-42.
   Ṭabarī, 'Tārīkh', Vol. II, Pp. 1282-1283.

'Abdullāh having pronounced from the pulpit the funeral eulogy of Al-Ḥajjāj, received from Sulaimān the order to curse him in the next religious gathering. Khālid carried out the orders of the Caliph[1].

The only man who remained faithful to the memory of Al-Ḥajjāj midst all this posthumous desecration was his freed slave and secretary Yazīd ibn Abī Muslim. Enveloped in the common disgrace common to the other creatures of the Viceroy of 'Irāq and led in chains before Sulaimān he heard this jesting question fall from the lips of the Caliph. "Do you think that Al-Ḥajjāj will be hurled into Hell or that he has already occupied his place there"?

فقال يزيد يا أمير المومنين لا تقل هذا في الحجاج فقد بذل لكم نصحه
وأحقن دونكم دمه، أمّن وليكم وأخاف عدوكم، وإنه يوم القيامة لعَنْ
يمين ابيك عبد الملك ويسار أخيك الوليد فاجعله حيث شئت

"Prince of the Believers," replied Yazīd, "Do not speak thus of him, for he devoted himself sincerely to your family; he shed his blood to defend you, projected your followers, intimidated your enemies. Besides, on the day of resurrection he will come on the right hand of your father 'Abdul Malik and the left hand of your brother Al-Walīd. Now place him where it pleases you"! "Get out from here and go before the malediction of God"! shouted Sulaimān furiously, And turning towards his assistants, "May God confound him"! he added. Nevertheless admiring the faithfulness and gratitude of this man for his master, he set him free[2]. Caliph Sulaimān died in 99 A.H. (717 A,D.).

The decadance which had set in the family of the Caliph in the wake of reprisals carried out in the family of Al-Ḥajjāj and his supporters was gradually followed by the most tragic events. The result was that in the space of a few years the glories and honour of the reign of Al-Walīd were dissipated. The political condition of the country was no better than it was three decades earlier at the time when Al-Hajjāj had unsheathed his sword for the Umayyad rulers and consolidated their strength.

1. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, ' 'Iqd', Vol. III, Pp. 13-14.
2. Ibn al-Athīr, 'Kāmil', Vol. V, P. 76.

ERRĀTA

p. 19, line 11, *read* 'Arafat *for* 'Araft.
p. 23, line 19, *read* for *instead of* or.
p. 24, line 26, *delete* years *in* Islam years.
line 26, *read* faithful *for* faithfull..
p. 39, line 22, *read* main *for* mani.
p. 43, line 17, *read* thorny *for* throny.
line 20, *read* Subsistence *for* Subsistance.
p. 47, line 4, *read* inspite *for* in spite.
p. 51, line 31, *insert* and *after* shoulders.
p. 61, line 29, *read* as *for* at.
p. 62, line 23, *read* battlefield *for* battle field.
p. 73, line 28, *read* remanents *for* remnants.
p. 83, line 30, *read* fortress *for* fortrees.
p. 86, line 32, *read* relatives *for* relative.
p. 94, line 4, *delete* could have *after* which.
line 38, *read* equally *for* equually
p. 95, line 27, *read* horsemen *for* horseman.
p. 98. line 37, *read* Has't *for* Has it.
p. 101, line 9, *read* Syrian *for* Syrians.
p. 103, line 31, *read* wealth *for* wealh.
p. 105, line 15, *delete* the *after* next.
line 22, *read* inhabitants *for* inhabilants.
line 25, *read* prefect *for* perfect.
line 28, *read* occasion *for* occassion.
p. 107, line 7, *read* verses *for* verse.
line 14, *insert* ; *after* refused.
p. 113, line 10, *read* the *for* ths *after* Al-Ḥajjāj.
line 31, *read* and *for* add *after* guile.
p. 117, line 9, *read* bitter *for* better.
p. 120, line 18, *insert* the *after* in.
p. 122, line 29, *read* Caliph's *for* Caliphs'.
p. 123, line 2, *read* must *for* most.
line 4, *delete* and *after* Caliph *and insert* and *after* Umar.
line 6, *read* administrative *for* administration.
line 7, *read* consequence *for* consequences.
line 28, *read* effort *for* effert.
p. 124, line 28, *read* personnel was *for* personnels were.
line 29, *read* non-Arab *for* non-Arabs.
p. 126, line 29, *delete* ; *after* afraid.
p. 127, line 18, *read* thereupon *for* there upon.

p. 128, line 12, *read* Caliph *for* Cliph.
line 28, *read* he *for* ue.
line 28, *read* buffaloes *for* buffallows
p. 131, line 2, *insert* a *after* serve.
p. 132, line 5, *read* gives *instead of* give.
p. 134, line 36, *read* built *for* build.
p. 138, line 21, *read* Clothed *for* Cloathed.
p. 139, line 5, *delete* " *before* replied.
p. 141, line 8, *read* Al-Ḥajjāj's convictions for Al-Ḥajjāj convictions.
p. 142, line 23, *read* filial *for* fililal.
p. 151, line 20, *read* Scared *for* Sacred.
p. 153, line 25, *read* ever *for* over.
p. 154, line 14, *reed* beautiful *for* beatiful.
p. 155, line 9, *read* opinion *for* openion.
line 18, *read* whom *for* who.
p. 156, line 9, *read* teachers *for* teacher.
line 14, *insert* a *between* to *and* man.
p. 158, line 20, *insert* honest *after* an.
p. 160, line 3, *read* something *for* some thing.
line 17, *read* Committed *for* Comitte.
p. 164, lines 19-20, *read* consistency *for* consistencey.
p. 169, line 19, *delete* take to.
p. 173, line 27, *read* requested *for* request.
line 34, *read* language *for* lanuage.
p. 182, line 22, *delete* fullstop *and read* he *for* He.
p. 183, line 8, *read* donor *for* donner.
p. 185, line 17, *delete* the *after* on.
line 24, *read* Al-Khaṭafā *for* Al-Khatofā.
p. 192, line 2, *read* she-camels *for* she-camel.
p. 195, line 3, *read* not *for* dot.
p. 197, line 10, *read* a *for* at *before* she-goat.
p. 191, line 5, *read* detachment *for* detatchment.
p. 200, line 20, *read* perusal *for* persual.
p. 208, line 22, *read* he was relenting and knew how to pardon. Al-Ḥajjāj gave the culprits the chance . . . . . . *for* he was relenting chance . . . .
p. 209, line 37, *read* Muhammed ibn *for* Muhammed in.
p. 215, line 5, *delete* to *after* not *and insert* to *after* pay.
p. 223, line 13, *read* protected *for* projected.

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